REMINISCENCES AND SOUVENIRS

OF

THE ASSASSINATION OF

ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

J. E. BUCKINGHAM, Sr.

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J. E. BUCKINGHAM, SR.

WASHINGTON:
PRESS OF RUFUS H. DARBY
1894.

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INTRODUCTION.

The tragic story of the assassination of President Lincoln is briefly told in the following pages, mainly from the lips of those who were incidentally connected with it, and the idea was entertained by Mr. John E. Buckingham that the new generation would be glad to read it in a condensed form.

The illustrations of the actors in that fearful drama, the building in which it was enacted and the relics which are in the possession of Mr. Buckingham add greatly to the interest of the little volume, and it was chiefly to present these in collected form that the narrative was written.

That the public may look with favor upon the venture and with the assurance that the accuracy of the facts presented cannot be questioned, is the earnest hope of Mr. Buckingham.

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LINCOLN SOUVENIRS.

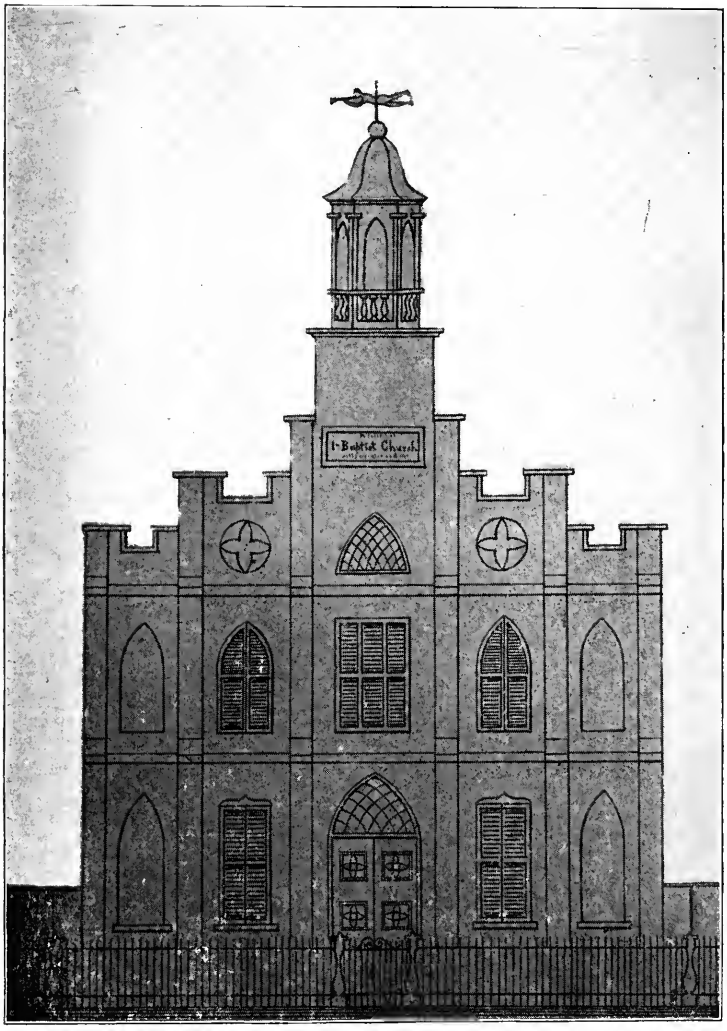
CHAPTER I.

BOOTH'S FATAL BULLET.

THE saddest and at the same time the most romantic incident in the history of this country was the assassination of President Lincoln, which took place on the 14th of April, 1865. The crime was committed shortly after ten o'clock at night, in Ford's Theater, which was located on Tenth Street, in Washington, D. C., and the man who fired the fatal shot was John Wilkes Booth.

Those who were at the theater on that occasion will never forget the shock that for an instant paralyzed every energy in the vast audience as the sound of the shot fell upon their ears and they then saw a man leap from the box in which the President was seated, brandishing a long knife in his hand. As he struck the stage he hissed between his clenched teeth the words "Sic Semper Tyrannis," and then rushing back behind the scenes disappeared. It all happened in a moment and the realization of what had taken place only came with the explanation of Major Rathbone, who was in the box with the Executive party, that the President had been shot.

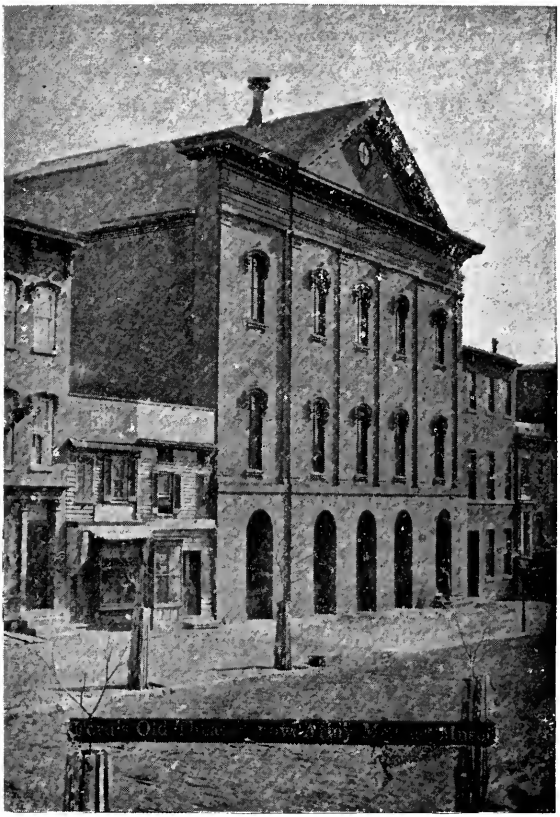
Those who were in the immediate front rows of the orchestra were the first to comprehend the crime that had been actually committed and many made a rush for



FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH, AFTERWARDS FORD'S THEATER.

the stage in order to capture or detain the assassin. Mr. William Withers, who was the leader of the orchestra, was the first to come within reaching distance of Booth, and to-day he has among his effects a dress coat bearing the cuts across the sleeve and breast which were made by Booth's knife on that fatal night. The plans of the assassin had been too well laid; he had his trained assistants in waiting; he reached the alley in the rear, leaped upon his horse and fled across the Navy Yard bridge accompanied by Herold, who was one of the conspiring party.

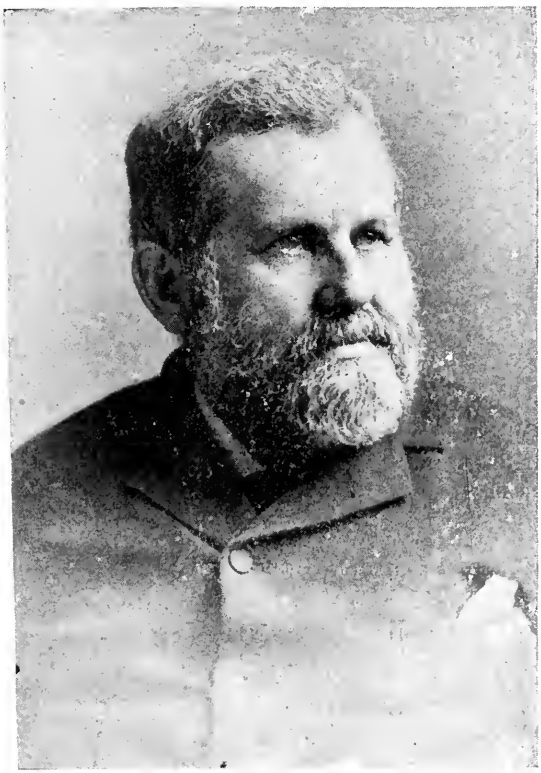
The crime was committed at a time when the war was over, when all the Southern armies had surrendered and when the nation was looking forward to peace; and every one was thankful that the long and bloody contest for the supremacy of the Union was over. Had it occurred during the heat of excitement while the war was going on it would not have struck the nation with such peculiar force. But, coming as it did, at a time when men's passions should have been quiet, it sent a thrill of horror throughout the entire length and breadth of the land. Had the assassin been one who had lost fortune, or kinsmen, or friends, by the war and who had worked himself into the belief that he had been peculiarly wronged, there might have been a shadow of an excuse for the crime, but it was a man who was an actor, who was not interested particularly in politics, upon whom honor and fame had been bestowed by the people of the North in his professional career and who, by his winning personality, had made a wide circle of acquaintances and had received many social attentions. Booth was the very



FORD'S THEATER.

last man that his friends would have believed capable of committing such a crime. The actual impelling motive must ever remain a secret. The most charitable construction to be put upon his act is that he had so brooded upon what he considered the wrongs of the South that his mind had become unbalanced, and he proposed to play the part of Brutus and rid the Republic of the man whom he considered to be its Cæsar.

The man who saw more of Booth on that fatal 14th of April night before he committed the crime, was Mr. John E. Buckingham, who was then the Doorkeeper at Ford's Theater. Mr. Buckingham, or "Buck" as he is familiarly known by his friends and acquaintances, has been associated with theaters all his life. He was born in Baltimore, in January, 1828, and when a boy became a call-boy in the old Front Street Theater. From there he gradually rose until he went to the front of the house to take tickets, and he is probably to-day the oldest and certainly the most respected ticket taker in the United States. From the Front Street Theater he went to the Baltimore Museum and then to the Holliday Street Theater in that city, and he came to Washington in 1861 to work at his trade, that of a carpenter, in the Navy Yard. As soon as he came here, Mr. John T. Ford desired to secure his services at his theater in Washington and he accepted the offer. The theater on Tenth Street, in which the assassination was committed, had formerly been a church and was altered into a theater in the early part of the war. It was destroyed by fire in 1863 and had been rebuilt and very handsomely decorated not many months before the assassination. Mr. Buckingham was the

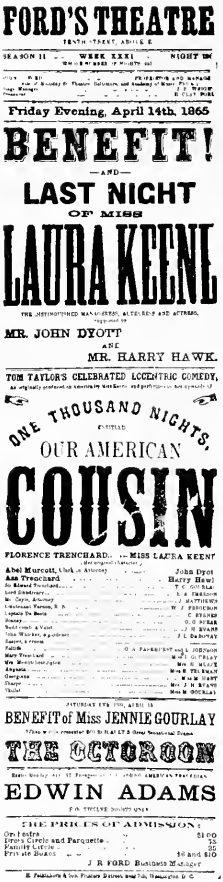


JOHN T. FORD.

doorkeeper, and on that fatal night he says that Booth came in and out of the theater five times before he finally committed the crime.

"In looking back over the occurrences now," says Mr. Buckingham in speaking of the event, "I can see that Booth must have been under great stress of excitement, although his actions did not seem to me at that time to be at all strange. He was naturally a nervous man and restless in his movements. I remember he first came in and said as he took hold of two of my fingers, 'What time of night is it?' I told him to step into the lobby and there he could see the clock. Next, he came and asked me to give him a chew of tobacco, which I readily did. Afterwards I went into the saloon just below the theater to get a drink, and Booth was there drinking brandy. I went back to the door and he soon came again. He passed into the house and stood a moment looking at the audience, and then went out again. Shortly afterwards he returned and passed in and around upstairs into the balcony, humming a tune. I did not see where he went at the time, for I was engaged in putting my checks in a little closet that I had there, and was so occupied when I heard the pistol shot. I turned just in time to see him leap to the stage, although for a moment I did not recognize the man as Booth. It was only when he raised himself and gave utterance to the words, 'Sic Semper Tyrannis,' that I discovered it was John Wilkes Booth.

"No one," continued Mr. Buckingham, "can picture the horror and excitement that took possession of that audience. Everybody jumped to their feet, ladies



FORD'S THEATRE

TENTH STREET, ABOVE E

SEASON 11 — WEEK XXXI — NIGHT 1[illegible]

[illegible]

Friday Evening, April 14th, 1865

BENEFIT!

—AND—

LAST NIGHT

OF MISS

LAURA KEENE

THE DISTINGUISHED MANAGERESS, ACTRESS AND ACTRESS,

MR. JOHN DYOTT

AND

MR. HARRY HAWK.

TOM TAYLOR'S CELEBRATED ECCENTRIC COMEDY,

ONE THOUSAND NIGHTS,

EXTITLED

OUR AMERICAN

COUSIN

FLORENCE TRENCHARD. — MISS LAURA KEENE

Abel Murcott, Clerk in Attorney — John Dyot

Asa Trenchard — Harry Hawk

Sir Edward Trenchard — T. C. GOURLAY

Lord Dundreary — L. A. FRENCH

Mr. Coyle, Attorney — J. MATTHEWS

Lieutenant Vernon, R. N. — W. J. FERGUSON

Captain De Boots — C. EVANS

Sharpy — G. G. SPEAR

Saddlecomb, a Valet — J. H. EVANS

John Wilcox, a gardener — J. L. DeBONAY

Sarah, a Fraser

Faith — G. A. FAGERHEIM and L. JOHNSON

Mary Trenchard — Mrs J. GOURLAY

Mrs Mountchessington — Mrs E. MOORE

Augusta — Miss E. TELEMAN

Georgiana — Miss M. HART

Sharpy — Mrs J. H. EVANS

Thisbe — Miss M. DOUGLAS

SATURDAY EVE. 1[illegible], APRIL 1[illegible]

BENEFIT of Miss JENNIE GOURLAY

THE OCTOROON

EDWIN ADAMS

THE PRICES OF ADMISSION:

Orchestra	$1 00
Dress Circle and Parquette	75
Family Circle	25
Private Boxes	$6 and $10

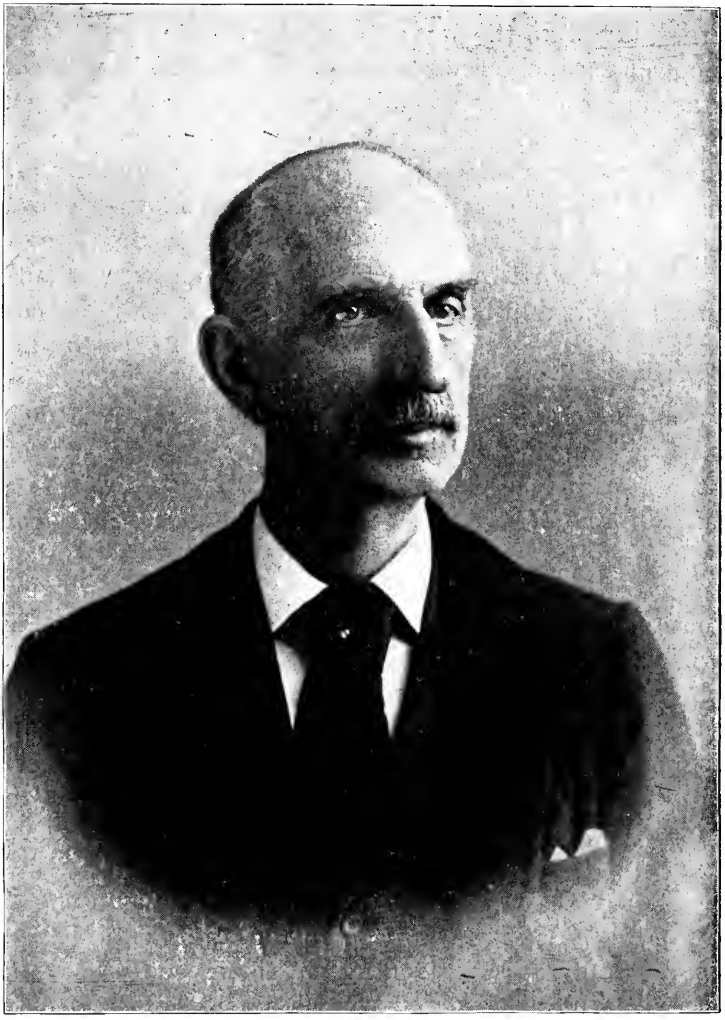
J. R. FORD Business Manager

[illegible]

COPY OF THE ORIGINAL PROGRAM.

screamed and fainted, men cried 'Stop him!' and several jumped to the stage in their endeavor to prevent Booth's escape. Finally ex-Mayor Wallack, who was standing on the sidewalk in front of the theater, was asked to come in and request the people to retire. He did so willingly, begging them to retire as quietly and as speedily as possible. In this way the theater was emptied, and then attention was turned to Mr. Lincoln, whose head had fallen forward, and who was evidently unconscious and breathing stertorously. Mr. Lincoln and his party occupied two boxes on that occasion and the partition between them had been taken out so that practically it was one large box. In one compartment sat Mr. Lincoln and Miss Harris, the daughter of Senator Ira Harris, of New York, and in the other were Mrs. Lincoln and Major Rathbone. Mr. Lincoln was unconscious and Miss Laura Keene went up into the box and took his head upon her lap and held it while an examination was made by some physician—I don't remember who—who happened to be in the audience, as to the character of the wound. It was found that the bullet had gone through one of the cervical vertebræ and lodged in the brain, and that the injury was necessarily fatal. He was then taken across the street to the house of a Mr. Petersen and Surgeon-General Barnes was sent for.

"Personally I cannot tell of any of the subsequent events in regard to Mr. Lincoln on that night, I was so busily engaged in looking out for myself. The theater was immediately taken possession of by United States troops and a guard placed at every entrance. I know it was months after that before I had returned



JOSEPH S. SESSFORD, TICKET SELLER, FORD'S THEATER.

to me an overcoat that I had left in the theater, and then it was in such a condition, although it was comparatively a new garment, that I gave it away to a colored man."

Mr. Joseph Sessford, who was in the ticket office of Ford's Theater on the night of the assassination, remembers distinctly the manner of Booth and of his coming into the theater and going out again several times during the evening. He can tell many anecdotes of the man whose ability was great as an actor but whose awful crime has left only obloquy upon a name that is otherwise honored. Mr. Sessford corroborates Mr. Buckingham in regard to Booth's actions just previous to his entering the private box and firing the fatal shot.

PRESIDENT ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

CHAPTER II.

Surgeon-General Barnes' Thrilling Experience.

It will be remembered that the conspiracy embraced not only the assassination of Mr. Lincoln but the death of every member of his Cabinet, and on that same 14th of April, 1865, the attempt was made by Payne to kill Secretary Seward, who lived then in the house on Fifteen-and-a-half Street, more recently famous as the residence of James G. Blaine and in which that statesman died.

Surgeon-General Barnes, who was sent for as soon as Mr. Lincoln was removed from the theater to the Petersen house, had a thrilling experience that night. He had been over to the house of his friend, Chief Justice Cartter, who lived about the middle of the square on H Street, between Fifteenth Street and Vermont Avenue, playing whist. A little before 10 o'clock a man came hurriedly to the door asking if Surgeon-General Barnes was there and saying that he was wanted immediately at Secretary Seward's. The man said that he had been to General Barnes' house and had ascertained from there where the Surgeon-General was. General Barnes, on questioning him as to the matter with Secretary Seward, was told that a man had attempted to kill him and had severely cut him in the face, arms and body with a knife.

General Barnes immediately went right around the corner to Mr. Seward's house and was accompanied by Justice Cartter. When he reached the Secretary's side

MRS. LINCOLN.

he found him very much exhausted by the shock of the encounter he had had with Payne and by the blood which he had lost from the wounds made by the knife of the would-be assassin. General Barnes immediately commenced dressing Mr. Seward's wounds, in which he was aided by Justice Cartter, and had nearly completed his work when a carriage drove up to the door and the bell was violently pulled. Judge Cartter himself went to the door and there found a night-liner, driven by a man whom he well knew, who gave him the information that the President had been shot at Ford's Theater, and had been taken to a house across the street, and that he had been sent for to bring General Barnes to his bedside. The man said he had been to General Barnes' house where he had learned that he was at Judge Cartter's, and that on going there he had been informed that he had gone around to Secretary Seward's. The servant at Judge Cartter's house had told the driver that Mr. Seward had been all cut to pieces, and was dying, and the man was thoroughly frightened.

Judge Cartter went to Mr. Seward's room and calling General Barnes aside told him of the shooting of Mr. Lincoln and how imperative it was that he should at once go to the bedside of the wounded Chief Magistrate. Mr. Seward's son and faithful attendant were briefly informed of the circumstances and then General Barnes and Judge Cartter went to the carriage in front of the house. After they had got in Judge Cartter told the driver not to spare his horses but to drive at the topmost speed. The man was so thoroughly frightened that he positively declared that he was afraid to drive

MR. LINCOLN'S HOME

down by the theater. He said he wouldn't drive into that crowd for all the money there was in Washington. Judge Cartter was a powerful man and jumping out of the carriage took the negro by the shoulders and thrust him inside with General Barnes and shut the door. Then mounting the box himself he drove down to the Petersen house. By the time they reached Eleventh and F Streets the guard had already been placed and an attempt was made to bar their progress. Judge Cartter shouted, however, who was in the carriage and without slacking his speed one bit continued until he pulled up in front of the Petersen house on Tenth Street.

Years afterwards, when Judge Cartter was telling the story of that night's ride to the writer, he said that it was one of the most thrilling events of his life and that he rarely alluded to it, because of the fearful tragedy that it brought up so forcibly to his memory. The shock at finding Secretary Seward prostrate and bleeding from the wicked gashes of Payne's knife was a severe one, but it was nothing in comparison to the effect of the announcement that the President had been shot and was dying.

Secretaries Stanton and Welles, who were already at Mr. Lincoln's side, were glad to see General Barnes as he walked into the room and took a seat beside the bed on which the President had been laid to make an examination of the wound caused by the pistol bullet of Booth. Carefully and tenderly the Surgeon-General noted where the entrance had been made and the probable course of the ball. He shook his head gravely, and his announcement that the wound was fatal and that death was but a question of only a few hours, only

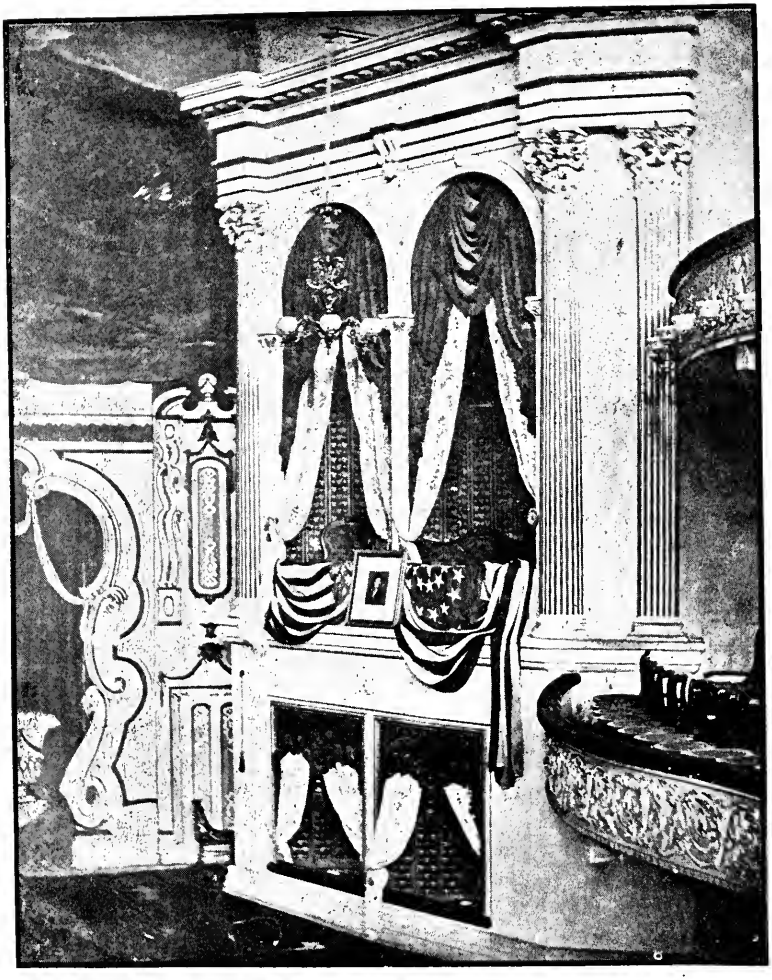
confirmed the sad forebodings of the two trusted secretaries, and Mr. Robert Lincoln, the President's oldest son, who had reached his father's bedside and anxiously watched the movements of the distinguished surgeon. Mrs. Lincoln, prostrated with grief, and wholly overcome by the shock of the tragedy, was in another room and to her was conveyed the judgment of General Barnes. She soon returned and taking her place beside the bed on which lay the dying President, kept vigil with the others through the long and weary watches of that fateful night until the end came at 7.23 on the morning of the 15th of April, when she became a widow, the country was orphaned by the loss of its Chief Magistrate and the whole world mourned the death of the greatest American since Washington.

CHAPTER III.

Execution of the Conspirators.

The incidents of the pursuit and the capture of Booth, his tragic death in a barn on Garrett's farm near Port Royal on the Rappahannock are too well known to need any rehearsal or at least more than a brief notice. Lieutenant Dougherty, who was in command of the pursuing cavalry, discovered that Booth and Herold were secreted in a large barn and were well armed. The cavalry then surrounded the barn and summoned Booth and his accomplice to surrender. Herold was inclined at first to accede to the request, but Booth accused him of cowardice and then they both peremptorily refused to surrender and made preparations to defend themselves. In order to take the conspirators alive the barn was fired and the flames getting too hot for Herold he approached the door of the barn and signified his willingness to be taken prisoner. Herold then came out of the barn and gave himself up and was securely handcuffed. Booth maintained a defiant attitude, refusing to surrender and in a braggadocio style challenged his pursuers to fight him by turns singly. As the roof of the barn was about falling in, and Booth manifested a disposition to make a bolt, he was shot by Sergeant Boston Corbett, of the Sixteenth New York, the ball taking effect in the neck, from the effects of which he died in about three hours.

Booth, before breathing his last, was asked if he had



PRIVATE BOX IN WHICH MR. LINCOLN WAS ASSASSINATED

anything to say, when he replied: "Tell my mother that I died for my country."

Herold and the body of Booth were brought to the Navy Yard at Washington, and from there Booth was buried first in the Arsenal grounds and his body was subsequently delivered to his brother Edwin and finally interred in the family lot in Baltimore. Herold was placed in confinement in the Arsenal, where he and the other members of the conspiracy, Payne, Atzerodt, Mrs. Surratt, Dr. Mudd and Spangler, were tried by military commission and Mrs. Surratt, Payne, Atzerodt and Herold were hanged. The execution took place on Friday, July 7, 1865. The prisoners had been defended on their trial by able counsel and every effort had been made, particularly in the case of Mrs. Surratt, to prevent the execution. All applications for clemency were, however, refused and the four named above paid the death penalty. The execution was under the charge of Major-General Hancock and the gallows was erected under the direction of Captain Roth of General Hartranft's staff by workmen from the arsenal. It was erected in the south yard of the building, between the old shoe shop and the wall, and the platform was reached by fifteen steps on the east side. There were nine heavy uprights holding the floor, above which arose, on the west side, the uprights supporting the beams from which hung the four ropes, each being of strong hemp, the slip consisting of nine twists and knot. The dimensions were twenty feet long, ten feet high to floor, twenty feet to beam, fifteen feet wide to platform. The drops, of which there were two, were each four feet by six, were directly beneath the beam and

MAJOR RATHBONE.

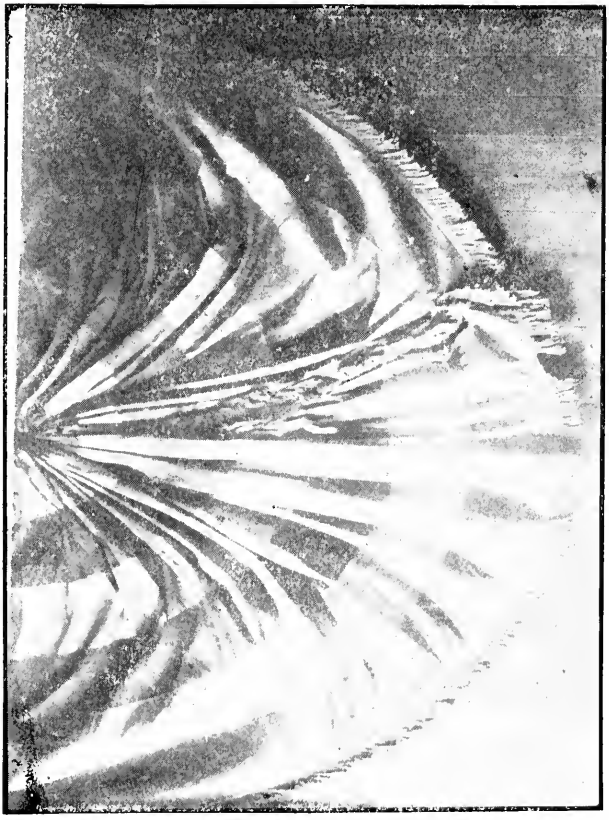
were held in their place by an upright which was knocked from under by two pieces of scantling being swung against it. The drop was six feet.

The day was intensely hot and the few hundred people who were permitted to witness the execution stood under umbrellas to protect them from the piercing rays of the sun. On the top of the wall, to the west, paced a sentinel in full uniform and up to the very time of the falling of the drop, the eyes of those in waiting turned eagerly backward, expecting that a reprieve would come in the case of Mrs. Surratt. When the criminals had been placed upon the platform, General Hartranft advanced to the front and read in a clear voice the death warrants of the prisoners. Following upon this came the last few words of religious consolation to the doomed ones. Fathers Wiget and Walter administered the dying service of the Catholic Church to Mrs. Surratt, holding the cross to her lips. Atzerodt seemed to be muttering a prayer. Rev. Dr. Gillette, Rev. Dr. Olds and the Rev. Dr. Butler made earnest prayers in behalf of each of the three men and then the arms, ankles and knees of all were bound. The white caps were drawn over their heads, the prop was knocked away, the drop fell and the four criminals hung quivering in the air.

David E. Herold was the only son of the late A. George Herold, who for over twenty years was the principal clerk of the Navy Store at the Washington Yard and who died in the fall of 1864 at his residence near the Yard. David was born at the corner of Eleventh Street east and I Street south. He was noted for trifling, frivolity, wholly unlike the others

JOHN WILKES BOOTH.

of the family, who were of a retired disposition, seeing little company. David was very fond of horses, dogs and guns, and was a great brag, never being without something to boast of. His father was exceedingly fond of sporting, and hunted frequently from Washington to Chapel Point, where he crossed to Virginia and thence back to Alexandria, usually taking David with him, and sometimes he and David would be out for a month or more in hunting. David was never known to drink until a few months previous to his arrest. He was naturally averse to hard work and considered bodily toil for his livelihood degrading. He attended school in the eastern section of the city when of a tender age, and finished off by three years' schooling in Georgetown College, after which he entered upon the drug business, his first engagement being with Dr. Bates, corner of Seventh and L (Navy Yard), then with Dr. F. S. Walsh, on Eighth Street west, and subsequently for a few months with W. S. Thompson, near the State Department, which was then a brick building on the southwest corner of 15th Street and Pennsylvania Avenue, and now forms the park on the north front of the Treasury Department. After his father's death he gave up his business, and spent most of his time in the country, stopping with various persons between Washington and Port Tobacco, and he was often seen drinking when in town. His most intimate acquaintances never heard him mention politics at that time, his whole conversation being of his exploits with dog and gun. The family were of Episcopalian persuasion, the mother and his seven sisters being attached to Christ Church, at the Navy Yard, but David seldom if



SILK FLAG TORN BY BOOTH LEAPING FROM BOX.

ever attended church. The family were highly esteemed in Washington. The grief of the family on hearing the death warrant was heartrending. From Herold's frivolous turn of mind and unstable character, it is believed that Booth did not rely upon him to do any of the heavy work of the great tragedy, but counted upon him as a valuable auxiliary in his flight, from his local knowledge of the country through which that flight was to be essayed.

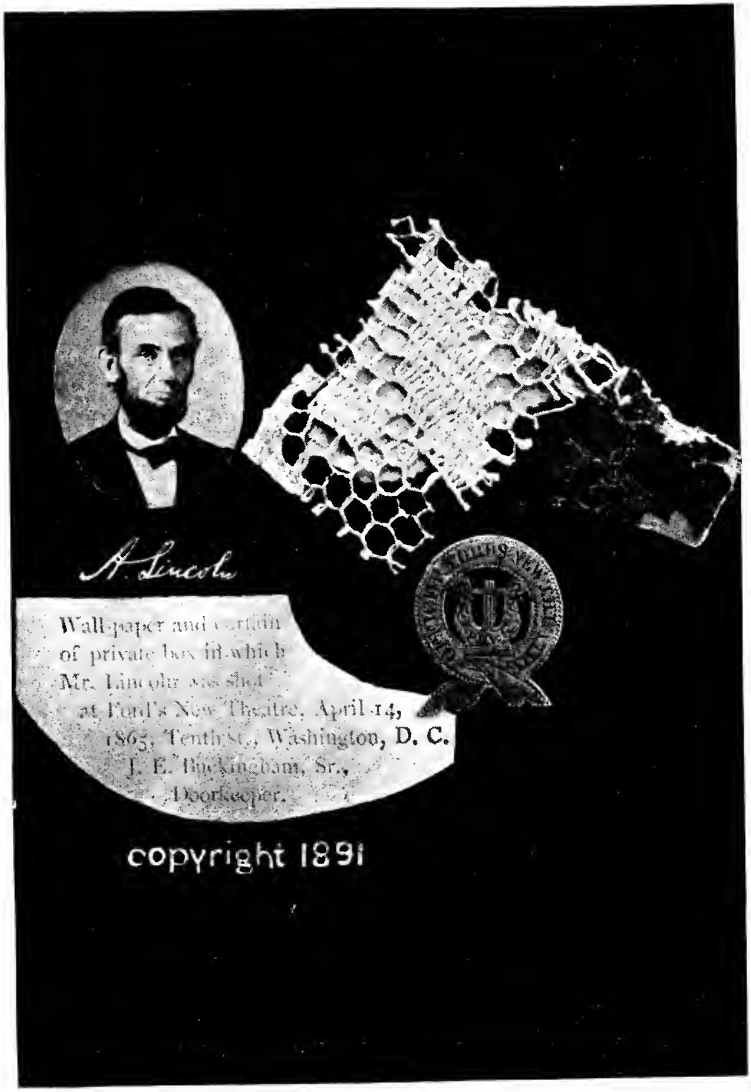
George A. Atzerodt was short, thick-set, round-shouldered, of muddy complexion, with brown hair, light-colored mustache and goatee, unpleasant green eyes, aged about thirty-three years, and a blacksmith by trade. He was born in Germany, but raised in Charles County, Maryland, where he spent the most of his life. His character was none of the best and for some years he was living with a woman, not his wife, near Port Tobacco, by which woman he had a child. For some months previous to the assassination he had been missing from Port Tobacco and it was believed that he had been engaged in blockade running and other traitorous practices.

Atzerodt alleged that during the latter part of February John Surratt and Booth wanted a man who understood boating, and could both get a boat and ferry a party over the Potomac. Surratt knew him, and under influence of promises of a fortune, Atzerodt consented to furnish the boat and do the ferrying. That plot failed, however. On the 13th of March Atzerodt went to the Kimmel House, and what took place afterward according to his statement to the court was as follows :

I am one of the party who agreed to capture the President of the United States, but I am not one of the party to kill the President of the

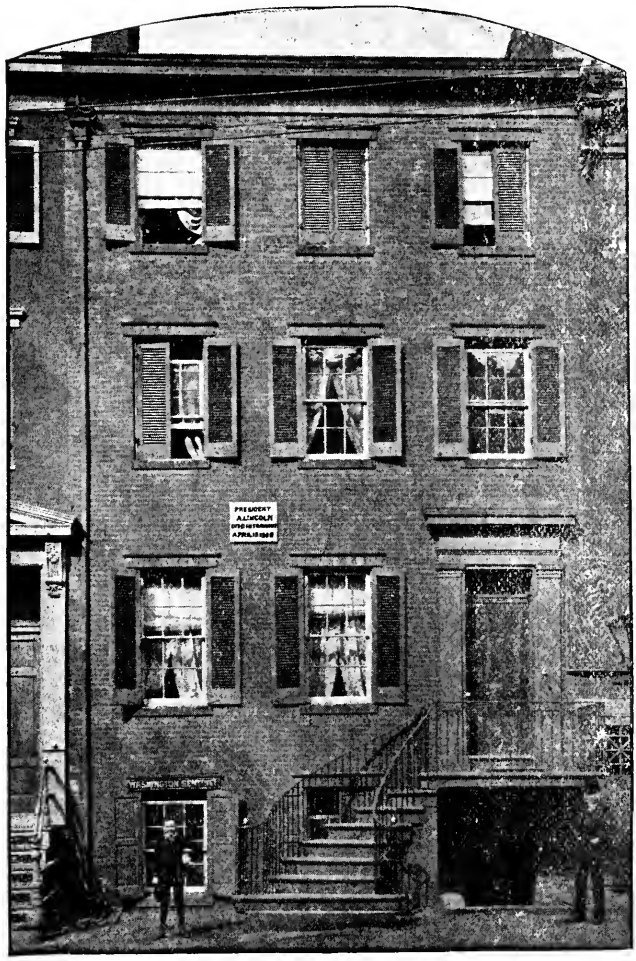
MISS LAURA KEENE.

United States, or any member of the Cabinet, or General Grant, or Vice President Johnson. The first plot to capture failed; the second, to kill, I broke away from the moment I heard of it. This is the way it came about: On the evening of the 14th of April I met Booth and Payne at the Herndon House in this city at 8 o'clock He (Booth) said he himself would take charge of Mr. Lincoln and General Grant, Payne should take Mr. Seward, and I should take Mr. Johnson. I told him I would not do it; that I had gone into the thing to capture, but I was not going to kill. He told me I was a fool; that I would be hung anyhow, and that it was death for every man that backed out, and so we parted. I wandered about the streets until about 2 o'clock in the morning, and then went to the Kimmel House, and from there pawned my pistol at Georgetown, and went to my cousin's house in Montgomery County, where I was arrested the 19th following. After I was arrested I told Provost Marshal Wells and Provost Marshal McPhail the whole story; also told it to Captain Monroe; and Colonel Wells told me that if I pointed out the way Booth had gone I would be reprieved, and so I told him I thought he had gone down Charles County, in order to cross the Potomac. The arms which were found in my room at the Kirkwood House and a black coat do not belong to me. On the afternoon of the 14th of April Herold called to see me and left the coat there. It is his coat, and all in it belongs to him, as you can see by the handkerchiefs, marked with his initial and with the name of his sister, Mrs. Naylor. Now I will state how I passed the whole of the 14th of April. In the afternoon about 2 o'clock I went to Keleher's stable on Eighth Street, near D, and hired a dark bay mare and rode into the country for pleasure, and on my return put up at Naylor's stable. The dark bay horse which I had kept at Naylor's before, on or about the 3d of April belonged to Booth, and also the saddle and bridle, and I had charge of him to sell him, and I do not know what became of him. At about 6 in the evening I went to Naylor's again and took out the mare, rode out for an hour and returned her to Naylor's. It was then nearly 8 o'clock and I told him to keep the mare ready at 10 o'clock, in order to return her to the man I hired her from. From there I went to the Herndon House. Booth sent a message to the "Oyster Bay," where I was, saying he wanted to see me, and I went. Booth wanted me to murder Mr. Johnson. I refused. I then went to the "Oyster Bay" on the Avenue above Twelfth Street, and whiled away the time until 10. At 10 I got the mare and having taken a drink with the hostler, I galloped about town, and went to the Kimmel House. From there I rode down to the depot and returned my horse, riding up Pennsylvania Avenue to Keleher's. From Keleher's I went down to the Navy Yard to get a room with Wash Briscoe. He had none, and by the time I got back to the


A. Lincoln
Wall-paper and
of private box in which
Mr. Lincoln was shot
at Ford's New Theatre, April 14,
1865, Tenth St., Washington, D. C.
J. E. Buckingham, Sr.,
Doorkeeper.
copyright 1891

Kimmel House it was near 2 o'clock. The man Thomas was a stranger I met on the street. Next morning, as stated, I went to my cousin's in Montgomery County. GEORGE A. ATZERODT.

Despite this statement of Atzerodt, there was no doubt whatever that he fully entered into the plot up to the very hour of its execution, and only lacked nerve at the last moment to execute what he had promised. The testimony, direct and circumstantial, was conclusive as to this.



PETERSEN'S HOUSE, OPPOSITE FORD'S THEATER, IN WHICH MR. LINCOLN DIED.

CHAPTER IV.

Payne, Who Attempted to Kill Secretary Seward.

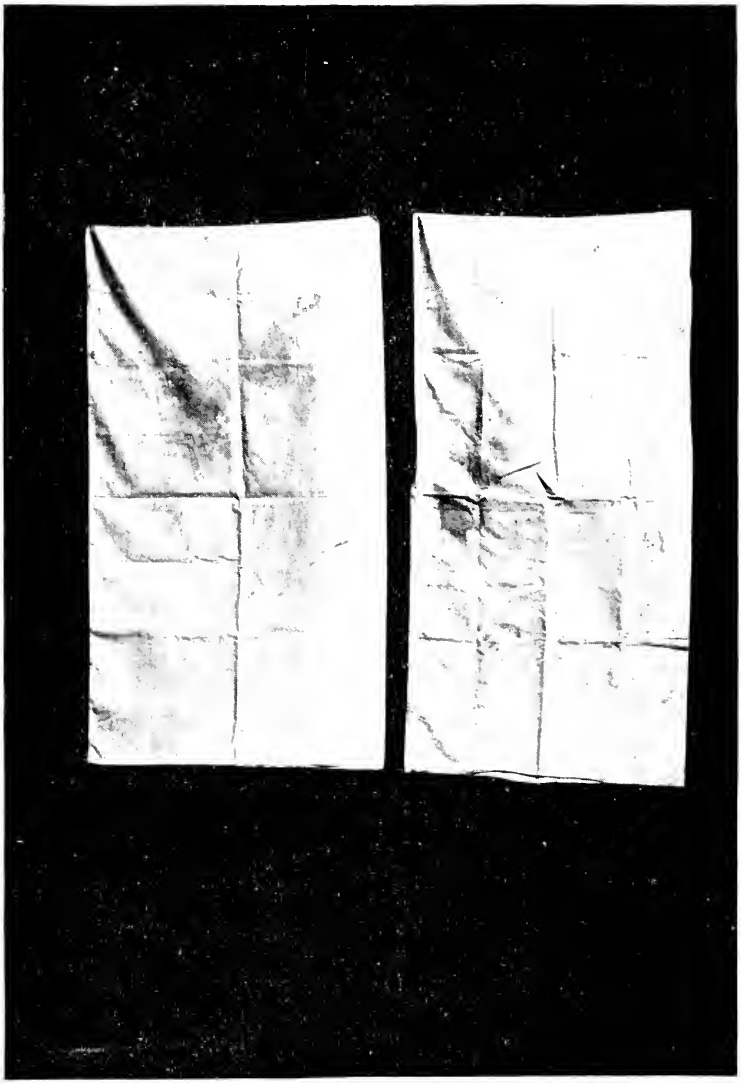
Lewis Payne Powell was the son of the Rev. George C. Powell, a Baptist minister, who lived at the time of the assassination at Live Oak Station, on the railroad between Jacksonville and Tallahassee, in the State of Florida, and was born in Alabama in the year 1845. Besides himself his father had six daughters and two sons. He lived for some time in Worth and Stewart Counties, Georgia, and in 1859 moved to Florida. At the breaking out of the war Powell was a lad of sixteen, engaged in superintending his father's plantation and a number of slaves. In 1861 his two brothers enlisted in the Confederate service, and Lewis in the same year enlisted in Captain Stewart's company in the Second Florida Infantry, commanded by Colonel Ward, and was ordered to Richmond. At Richmond his regiment joined the army of General Lee and was joined to A. P. Hill's corps. With it he passed through the Peninsula campaign and the battles of Chancellorsville and Antietam. Here he heard that his two brothers had been killed at the battle of Murfreesboro. Finally, on the 3d of July, 1863, in the charge upon the Federal center at Gettysburg, he was wounded, taken prisoner, and detailed as a nurse in a Pennsylvania hospital.

From Gettysburg he was sent to West Buildings Hospital, Pratt Street, Baltimore, and remained until October, 1863, when he deserted for his regiment, and walked through Winchester, met a regiment of Con-

BED SPREAD USED ON THE BED IN WHICH MR. LINCOLN DIED.

federate cavalry at Fauquier, which he joined and remained in that service until January 1, 1865. About that time he deserted and came to Alexandria, sold his horse, gave his name as Payne, took the oath of allegiance as a refugee from Fauquier, and went to Baltimore and took a room at the house of Mrs. Branson, a lady he had met at Gettysburg. Here he fell in with Booth, whom he had met in Richmond, and became a ready ally to the atrocious conspirator, and much of the preliminary blocking out of the work of the conspiracy seems to have been done by this brace of cool, desperate villains.

According to the statement of Payne, the plan was first to come to Washington, where the gang of working conspirators were to go out on horseback to the vicinity of the Soldiers' Home, capture President Lincoln and deliver him to the rebel authorities. According to the testimony of Lewis J. Weichman, such a gang, including Booth, Payne and John Surratt, rode out on horseback, one afternoon subsequent to the 4th of March, and returned very much excited and discomposed, as if baffled in some cherished undertaking. The supposition was that an attempt to waylay the President at that time was really attempted and miscarried, but the scheme to carry off Mr. Lincoln in broad daylight, to the Confederate lines, was too absurdly impracticable to have been really entertained by Booth, at least, if any of his fellow conspirators were crackbrained enough to be deluded by it. There is little doubt that Booth meant murder whenever he should come in contact with the President and be able to deal the blow with any chance of escape.



PILLOW CASES USED ON THE BED IN WHICH MR. LINCOLN DIED.

Payne alleges that on the night of the fatal 14th of April he met with Booth at the Herndon House at 8 o'clock, where the work of each was assigned, and Booth directed him to meet him at the Anacostia Bridge after the deed was done. They parted, not again to meet in this world.

Mrs. Mary E. Surratt was raised near Waterloo, on Calvert's manor, in Prince George County, Maryland. Her maiden name was Jenkins. Her father died when she was quite young. As she grew up she displayed considerable force of character, and expressed a desire to have a better education than was attainable in her neighborhood, and she was sent to a female seminary in Alexandria.

Returning to her mother's home she became an acknowledged belle of Prince George County, and quite as noted for her strong will, she seldom failing in anything she undertook. She married Surratt about the year 1835, and the couple first settled at a place known as Condin's Mill, near Camp Stoneman (Giesboro), which property Surratt inherited from an uncle named Neal. After they had lived there a few years the house was set on fire by their slaves, and the Surratts barely escaped from the flames with their lives.

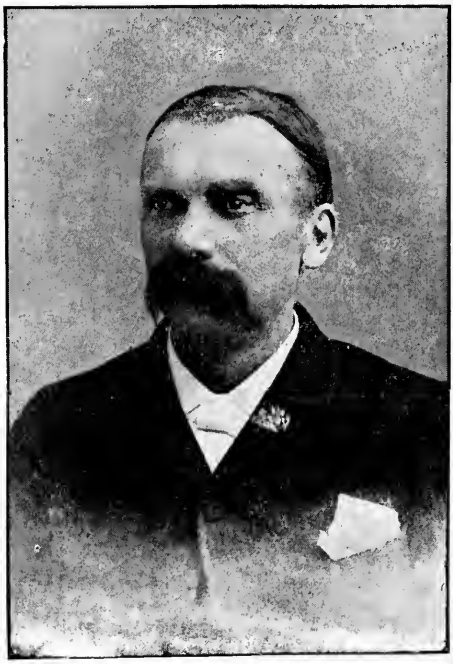
Surratt afterward engaged on the Orange and Alexandria Railroad as a contractor, and on finishing his work returned to Prince George County and bought a farm, on which he established the tavern known as "Surratt's," and afterward was appointed postmaster at that point, but he being an uneducated man the duties of the office devolved upon his wife. They had three children—a daughter and two sons. One of the

KEY OF THE CELL AT THE ARSENAL IN WHICH PAYNE WAS CONFINED.

latter (Isaac) went South at the outbreak of the rebellion, entering the Southern army, it is said. The other son (John) stayed about home, spending his time in idleness or worse. The father was known as a pro-slavery man, and a sympathizer with the South in the rebellion to some extent, but was not looked upon as an open secessionist. He died about three years previous to President Lincoln's assassination, and soon after his widow leased the property and went to Washington, where she opened a boarding house on H Street, which house has since become notorious as the scene where was concocted some of the most stupendous deviltry of the world's history.

"Surratt's" (house and farm) was situated on the mail route from Washington to Leonardtown, Md., and was twelve miles from Washington, at the junction of the Marlboro and Piscataway roads. The house was a comfortable two-story double frame building containing nine rooms, and on the front and side were porticos for the visitors to enjoy the fresh air during the sultry seasons. The farm was well adapted for gardening purposes, and though not very extensive, was profitable for wheat and tobacco.

When Mrs. Surratt went to Washington to open a boarding house she rented the tavern stand to John M. Lloyd at a rent of $500 per annum.

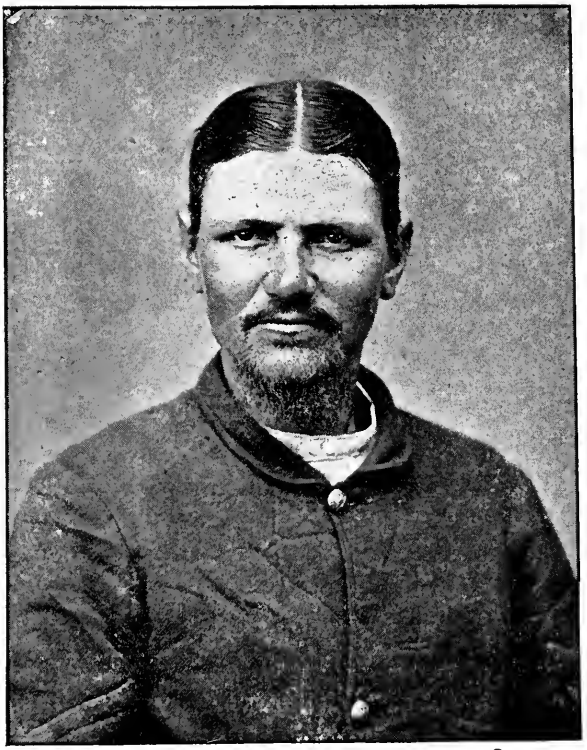


DETECTIVE WILLIAM WILLIAMS.

CHAPTER V.

John Wilkes Booth the Moving Spirit of the Conspiracy.

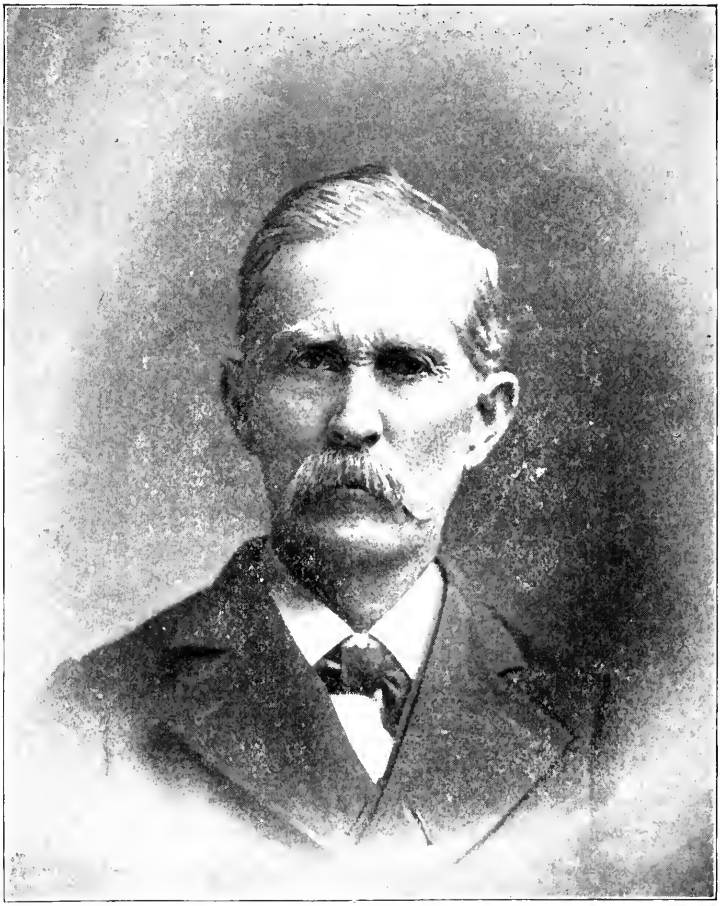
John Wilkes Booth, who was the moving spirit in this whole conspiracy, that culminated in the assassination of President Lincoln, was an actor who had a reputation that extended throughout the entire country. He was a son of Junius Brutus Booth, the great American tragedian, and a brother of the hardly less famous Edwin Booth of the present day. The family consisted of four boys, J. B. Jr., Edwin, John Wilkes and Joseph, and two daughters, one of whom married the celebrated comedian, John Sleeper Clarke. The elder Booth and his family resided in Baltimore, where all the children were born, and it was natural that they should have the feelings which generally obtained in the Southern States in regard to the negro and slavery. When the war of the rebellion broke out all the family espoused the Union cause, with the exception of John Wilkes, who remained in the North, although it is believed he frequently went through the lines on secret missions for the Confederate government. Still he was apparently loyal to the Union, because he played engagements in various theaters in the North, and he became quite popular, both as an actor and as a man, wherever he went. He was an extremely handsome man, taller in stature and of better figure than either of his brothers, and he had a winning personality that attracted people to him. The writer met him and took



SERGT. BOSTON CORBETT, WHO SHOT BOOTH.

tea with him in Boston the Saturday night before he opened his first engagement as a star in that city, and was deeply impressed with his modest bearing and his winning manner. He was to open at the Boston Museum on Monday night, and he had selected *Richard III.* as his initial character. He said he felt timid about appearing before a Boston audience in that character, which had been made famous both by his father and his brother Edwin, and besides he knew that Boston audiences were coldly critical anyway. Still he believed that he could bring out whatever power that was in him better as *Richard*, and make a better first impression in that part than in any other in his repertoire. I saw him on his opening night, and while the performance was crude in some respects, there were flashes of positive genius that, I was told by those who had seen his father, brought back strikingly memories of that greatest of *Richards*.

Booth was quite successful in his profession and made a great deal of money, his income averaging about $20,000 a year. As he was unmarried he had more than enough to provide for his desires and during the last two years of his life he was rather desultory in making his engagements. He spent a good deal of time in Washington, where he had a great many friends in all classes of society. He was quite popular in social circles and he came very near marrying the daughter of a distinguished New England Senator. Shortly before he committed the crime which he expiated with his life, he played "Pescara, the Apostate" at the same theater in which he assassinated Mr. Lincoln, and I think but



THOMAS A. JONES, WHO AIDED BOOTH'S ESCAPE.

a week before the crime was committed he played *Romeo* to Avonia Jones' *Juliet* at the National Theater.

There is no doubt that it was the original intention of the conspirators to capture President Lincoln and hold him as a hostage until some terms should be made recognizing the Confederacy. But the surrender of Lee and the conclusion of the war rendered such a proceeding absolutely useless. One would naturally suppose that after the war was over and there was general rejoicing both North and South, that the long and bloody conflict had been ended and that the soldiers who formed the mass of the armies on both sides should once again return to their homes and families and their ordinary avocations, that all designs upon the freedom or life of the Chief Magistrate would have been abandoned. But it appears that their plans were still kept up and were changed from that of capture to assassination. The house of Mrs. Surratt on H Street, where the meetings of those engaged in the conspiracy were held, still stands and is an object of curiosity and interest to strangers visiting the city. Booth's plans were well laid and his preparations for escape from the theater and the city were successful. The way behind the scenes was kept clear, while his fleet horse was ready for mounting in the alley back of the theater, held by Spangler and Herold, who accompanied him in his flight. It is generally believed that had he not broken his leg at the time he jumped from the box to the stage by his spur catching in the flag that decorated the front of the box, he would have made his escape complete and managed to get out of the country before he could be captured. How he must have suffered that night riding for his life with his broken leg dangling in the stirrup

THE CONSPIRATORS.

until he reached the home of Dr. Mudd who rendered him what brief medical aid was in his power. The story of his pursuit by the United States soldiers, of his finally being traced to the Garrett farm, of the capture of Herold and the shooting of Booth by Boston Corbett, is too well known to be rehearsed here. His body was brought to this city, placed upon a gunboat until it was thoroughly identified, then it was buried in the Arsenal grounds and subsequently delivered over to the family and now lies in the Booth plot in Greenmount Cemetery, in Baltimore.

Booth's friends have always claimed that his mind had become unbalanced by continually thinking over the misfortunes of the South, and this is partially borne out by the following letter which he left with his brother-in-law, John Sleeper Clarke, "for safe keeping," and which was handed to the United States Marshal at Philadelphia after the assassination had been committed and it was known that Booth was the criminal:

———, ———, 1864.

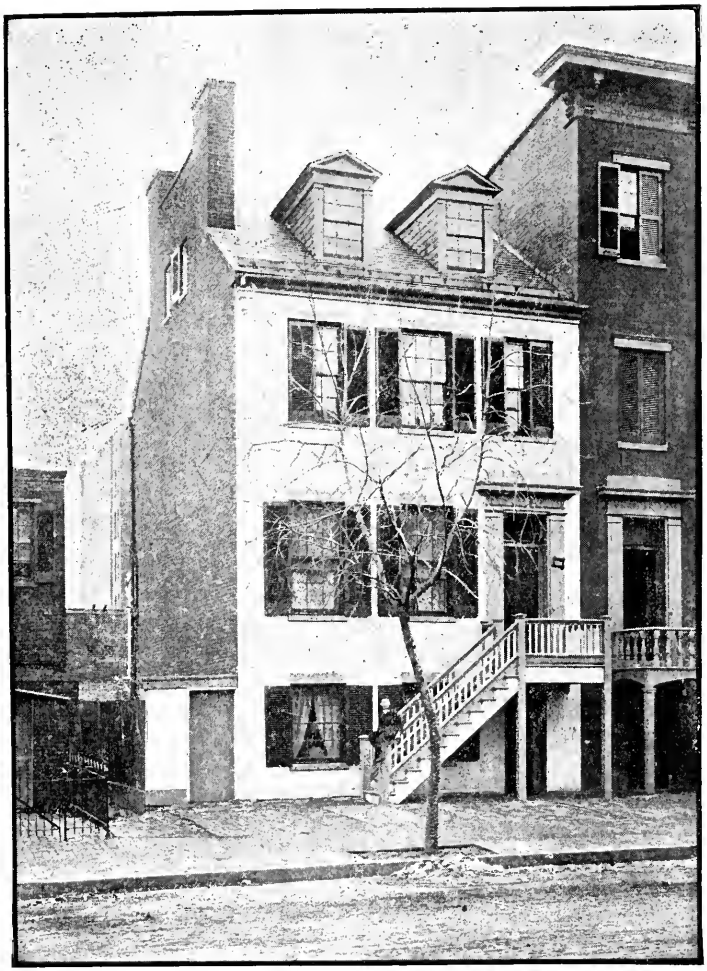
My Dear Sir:—You may use this as you think best. But as some may wish to know when, who and why, and as I know not how to direct, I give it (in the words of your master).

"TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN."

Right or wrong, God judge me, not man. For be my motive good or bad, of one thing I am sure, the lasting condemnation of the North.

I love peace more than life. Have loved the Union beyond expression. For four years have I waited, hoped and prayed for the dark clouds to break, and for the restoration of our former sunshine. To wait longer would be a crime. All hope for peace is dead. My prayers have proved as idle as my hopes. God's will be done. I go to see and share the bitter end.

I have ever held the South were right. The very nomination of Abraham Lincoln, four years ago, spoke plainly of war—war upon Southern rights and institutions. His election proved it. "Await an



MRS. MARY SURRATT'S HOUSE, 604 H ST N. W., WASHINGTON, D. C.

overt act." Yes, till you are bound and plundered. What folly. The South was wise. Who thinks of arguments and patience when the finger of his enemy presses on the trigger? In a foreign war I, too, could say, "country, right or wrong." But in a struggle such as ours (where the brother tries to pierce the brother's heart) for God's sake, choose the right. When a country like this spurns justice from her side she forfeits the allegiance of every honest freeman, and should leave him untrammeled by any fealty soever, to act as his conscience may approve.

People of the North, to hate tyranny, to love liberty and justice, to strike at wrong and oppression, was the teaching of our fathers. The study of our early history will not let me forget it, and may it never.

This country was formed for the white, not for the black, man. And looking upon African slavery from the same standpoint held by the noble framers of our Constitution, I, for one, have ever considered it one of the greatest blessings (both for themselves and us) that God ever bestowed upon a favored nation. Witness heretofore our wealth and power, witness their elevation and enlightenment above their race elsewhere. I have lived among it most of my life, and have seen less harsh treatment from master to man than I have beheld in the North from father to son. Yet Heaven knows, no one would be willing to do more for the negro race than I, could I but see a way to still better their condition.

But Lincoln's policy is only preparing the way for their total annihilation. The South are not, nor have they been fighting for the continuance of slavery. The first battle of Bull Run did away with that idea. Their causes since the war have been noble and greater far than those that urged our fathers on. Even should we allow they were wrong at the beginning of this contest, cruelty and injustice have made the wrong become the right, and they stand now (before the wonder and admiration of the world) as a noble band of patriotic heroes. Hereafter, reading of their deeds, Thermopylæ would be forgotten.

When I aided in the capture and execution of John Brown (who was a murderer on our western border, and who was fairly tried and convicted before an impartial judge and jury of treason, and who, by the way, has since been made a god), I was proud of my little share in the transaction, for I deemed it my duty, and that I was helping our common country to perform an act of justice. But what was a crime in John Brown is now considered (by themselves) as the greatest and only virtue of the whole Republican party. Strange transmigration! Vice to become a virtue, simply because more indulge in it.

I thought then, as now, that the abolitionists were the only traitors in the land, and that the entire party deserved the same fate of poor old Brown; not because they wished to abolish slavery, but on account of

the means they have ever endeavored to use to effect that abolition. If Brown were living I doubt whether he himself would set slavery against the Union. Most, or many, in the North do, and openly curse the Union, if the South are to return and retain a single right guaranteed by every tie which we once revered as sacred. The South can make no choice. It is either extermination or slavery for themselves (worse than death) to draw from. I know my choice.

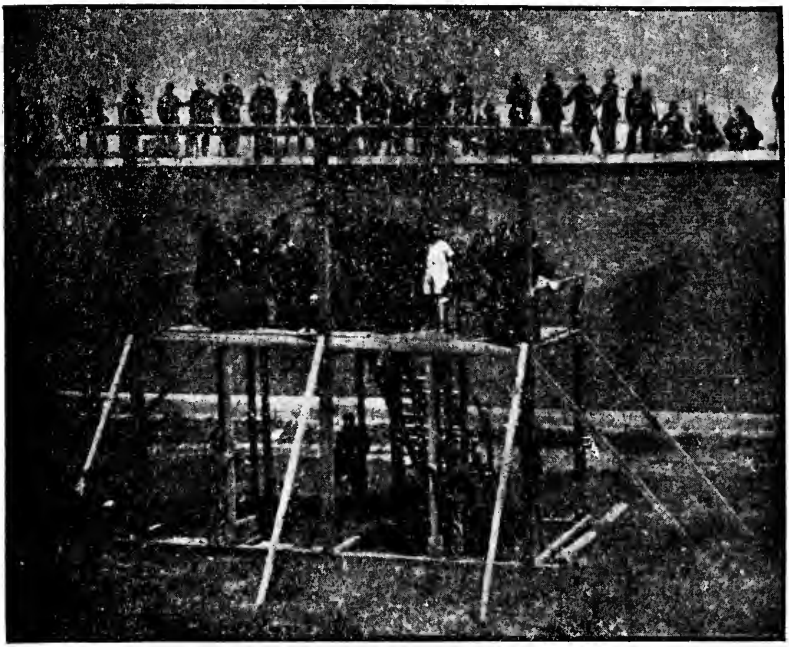
I have also studied hard to discover upon what grounds the right of a State to secede has been denied, when our very name, United States, and the Declaration of Independence, both provide for secession. But there is no time for words—I write in haste. I know how foolish I shall be deemed for undertaking such a step as this, where, on the one side, I have many friends and everything to make me happy; where my profession alone has gained me an income of more than twenty thousand dollars a year, and where my great personal ambition in my profession has such a great field for labor. On the other hand, the South have never bestowed upon me one kind word; a place now where I have no friends, except beneath the sod; a place where I must become either a private soldier or a beggar. To give up all of the former for the latter, besides my mother and sisters, whom I love so dearly (although they so widely differ from me in opinion), seems insane, but God is my judge. I love justice more than I do a country that disowns it; more than fame and wealth; more (Heaven pardon me if wrong), more than a happy home. I have never been upon a battlefield; but oh, my countrymen, could you all but see the reality or effects of this horrid war, as I have seen them (in every State, save Virginia), I know you would think like me, and would pray the Almighty to create in the Northern mind the sense of right and justice (even should it possess no seasoning of mercy), and that He would dry up this sea of blood between us, which is daily growing wider. Alas, poor country, is she to meet her threatened doom?

Four years ago I would have given a thousand lives to see her remain (as I had always known her) powerful and unbroken. And even now I would hold my life as naught to see her what she was. O, my friends, if the fearful scenes of the past four years had never been enacted, or if what had been, had been but a frightful dream, from which we could now awake, with what overflowing of hearts could we bless our God and pray for his continued favor. How I have loved the old flag can never now be known. A few years since and the entire world could boast of none so pure and spotless. But I have of late been seeing and hearing of the bloody deeds of which she has been made the emblem, and would shudder to think how changed she had grown. O, how I have longed to see her break from the mist of blood and death that circles around her

folds, spoiling her beauty and tarnishing her honor. But no, day by day she has been dragged deeper and deeper into cruelty and oppression, till now (in my eyes) her once bright red stripes look like bloody gashes on the face of Heaven. I look now upon my early admiration of her glories as a dream. My love (as things stand to-day) is for the South alone. Nor do I deem it a dishonor in attempting to make for her a prisoner of this man, to whom she owes so much of misery. If success attends me, I go penniless to her side. They say she has found that "last ditch" which the North have so long derided, and been endeavoring to force her in, forgetting they are our brothers, and that it's impolitic to goad an enemy to madness. Should I reach her in safety and find it true, I will proudly beg permission to triumph or die in that same "ditch" by her side.

A Confederate, Doing Duty upon His Own Responsibility.

J. Wilkes Booth.



HANGING OF THE CONSPIRATORS.

CHAPTER VI.

Relics of the Tragedy in Possession of Mr. Buckingham.

Very few relics of that fearful tragedy when the President of the United States was, for the first time in the history of this country, stricken down by the hand of an assassin, remain. Probably the greatest number of mementoes of that sad event are in the possession of Mr. John E. Buckingham, who was the doorkeeper of the theater and whose experiences on the night of the calamity have already been told. There is a piece of the lace curtain that draped the box. He has also an original program of the performance of "Our American Cousin," in which Laura Keene and her excellent company appeared on that night. Besides these he has the large key that unlocked the cell at the Arsenal grounds in which Payne, the assassin of Secretary Steward, was confined and from which he went forth to pay the penalty of his crime upon the gallows. So far as photographs are concerned, he has quite a number which he prizes very highly and which are of incalculable value as faithful representatives of the actors and incidents in that terrible drama. He has photographs of President Lincoln, of John Wilkes Booth, of Laura Keene, of the box as it appeared on the night in question, of all these mementoes mentioned above, and one representing the execution of the prisoners in the Arsenal grounds.

It has already been stated that as soon as possible

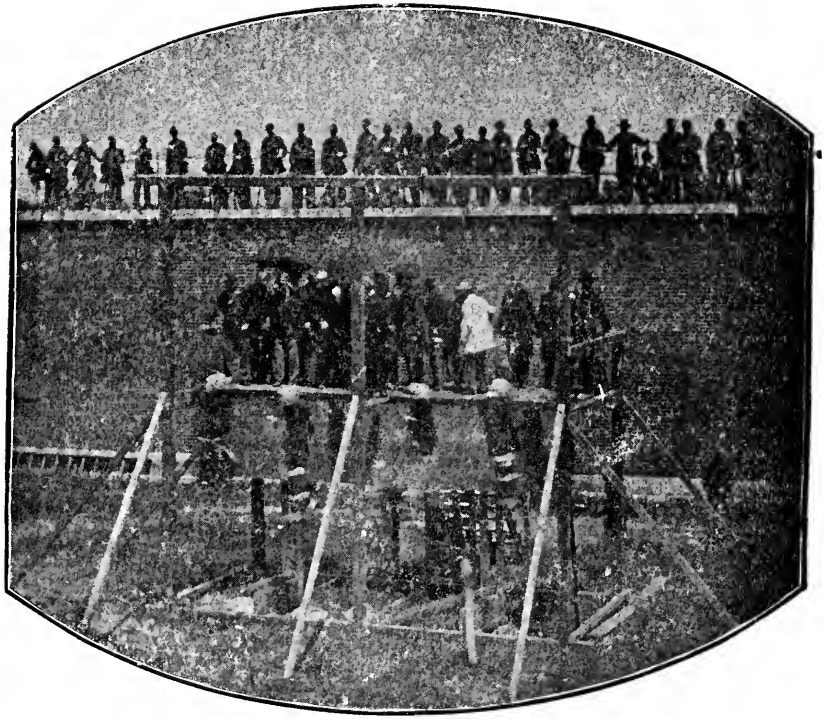
after Mr. Lincoln was shot, he was conveyed across the street to the house of Mr. Petersen, where he remained until he died. That building is an historic one now, and its former use is indicated by a tablet of white marble placed in the outer wall stating that here President Lincoln died on the 15th of April, 1865. Mr. Petersen's son has retained in his possession the pillow cases and the coverlet which were on the bed on which the martyred President was placed and where he breathed his last. These still bear the stains of the blood which flowed from the wound made by the assassin's hand and are ghastly but eloquent evidences of the saddest tragedy in American history.

CHAPTER VII.

Booth's Escape and Capture.

There are two men living who probably had more to do with Booth's escape and capture than any two men now upon earth. Those two men are Thomas A. Jones, who aided Booth's escape and kept him hid down at Cox's farm until he could get an opportunity to let him and Herold cross the Potomac and get into Virginia, and the other is Captain William Williams, at present a detective in this city, who was a captain of cavalry at the time of the assassination of President Lincoln and who commanded the first party who really started in pursuit of Booth. About three years ago the two men met in this city and talked over the events of a quarter of a century before.

Captain Williams was well acquainted with Booth, and on the night of the assassination he passed Booth standing in front of Ford's Theater and asked him to join him in a glass of beer. Booth thanked him and declined. While the captain was in Doc Claggett's restaurant, corner of Tenth and Pennsylvania Avenue, the alarm was sent out that the President had been shot at Ford's Theater. The captain ran to the theater and there he was ordered to bring his cavalry from the White House. The order was carried out, and in a few minutes the clatter of the cavalry horses sounded down the Avenue. After Captain Williams returned to the theater Provost Marshal O'Beirne ordered him to report to the Kirkwood House, Twelfth Street and



HANGING OF THE CONSPIRATORS.

Pennsylvania Avenue, where Vice President Johnson was living, and guard him. This the captain did through the long and trying night. There was little rest for the Vice President. He paced the floor of his room and would wring his hands and say: "They shall suffer for this. They shall suffer for this."

About daylight the cavalry, under the command of Lieutenant Lovett, dashed up to the front of the hotel, and General O'Beirne commanded Captain Williams to take the cavalry and hunt for Booth.

"Where must I go?" asked the captain.

"How do I know?" replied the General. "Go, and don't return to Washington until you find Booth; but mind—don't harm a hair on his head."

Mounting a magnificent charger the captain clapped spurs and with a "Come, boys!" the cavalry were soon going at a rapid speed toward the Eastern Branch Bridge, which was successfully crossed by the captain knocking the sentry down by running over him with his horse.

"There was no time to stand and explain to the sentry," said the captain; "time was precious."

The first stop was made at Surrattsville, where John M. Lloyd kept a tavern, and at which place Mrs. Surratt had left a field glass and two carbines for Booth and Herold. Lloyd was arrested and sent back to Washington under guard.

"And from here we went to Bryantown," said the captain, eyeing Jones closely, "and of course I remember you. I can never forget that come-to-the-Lord-and-be-saved expression you wear now and wore then. But if I had known then what I do now, how different

would things have been. Why, you ought to be shot! If you had told me where Booth was you would have been the biggest man in America, and would have had money by the flour-barrel full."

"Yes, and a conscience as black as purgatory," said Jones, "and the everlasting hatred of the people I loved. No, captain, I never the first time thought of betraying Booth. After he was placed in my hands I determined to die before I would betray him."

"Who placed him in your hands?"

"Samuel Cox. It was on the morning of the 16th of April, Sunday morning, that one of Cox's white men came to my house on Huckleberry farm, and told me that Cox wanted to see me at once. I suspected something, as I heard the evening before that Lincoln had been killed. I had a horse saddled and rode over to Cox's and there he told me that Booth and Herold had been there, and wanted assistance to get across the river. I was told where the men were—in a pine thicket, about a mile and a half from the house. I was given instructions how to reach them without being shot—certain signs by whistling, etc. Upon reaching the dense pines I met Herold, to whom I explained that I was sent by Cox. I was then piloted to where Booth was. He lay on the ground, wrapped in a pile of blankets, and his face bore traces of pain. Booth asked me many questions as to what people thought of the assassination. He appeared to be proud of what he had done. I at the time thought he had done a good act, but, great God! I soon saw that it was the worst blow ever struck for the South.

"Well, captain, I can talk now, and I did the best I

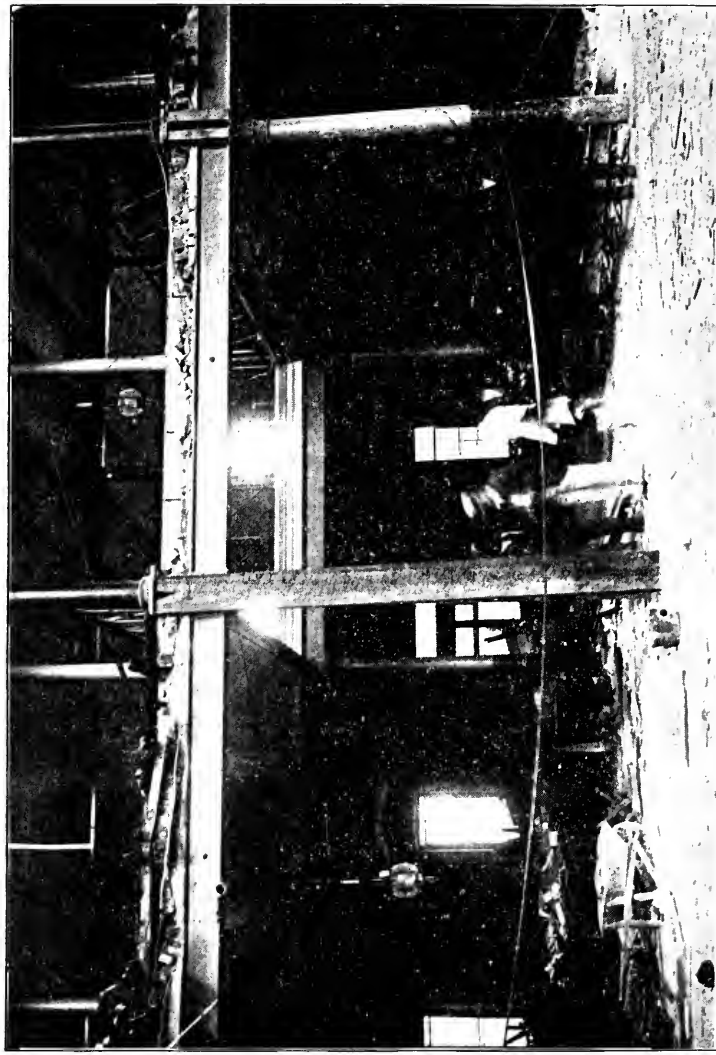
could for the poor fellow. I carried him something to eat and papers to read, and tried to keep him in good spirits until I got a chance to send him across the river. The country, as you know, was full of soldiers and detectives, and I did not know how soon I would get him away. I think it was the following Tuesday I went up to Port Tobacco to see how the 'land lay' and it was there, in the bar of Brawner's Hotel, you said you would give $300,000 to any man who would tell where Booth was."

"Yes; and if you had given me the information you would be to-day General Jones instead of a discharged laborer from the navy yard."

"That may be true, but how could I give up the life of that poor devil over there in the pine thicket, hovering between life and death, and the confidence reposed in me by the best friend I ever had, Samuel Cox. I was a creature of circumstances. I did not know Booth, but when Cox put him in my keeping nothing would have tempted me to betray him. I could have placed my hands on him, but honor and truth were worth more to me than the entire wealth of the Government.

"I have lived in plenty and I have lived in poverty, but God knows I have never betrayed a trust or done that which I believed dishonorable. While I was not ashamed of the part I played in that sad tragedy, I was never used to speaking of it. I preferred to have it buried with the past, and but for the mean little spite-work of Congressman Mudd this matter would have never come out.

"But to return to Booth and Herold. I did the best



THE RUINED FLOORS OF FORD'S THEATER AFTER THE COLLAPSE, JUNE, 1893.

I could for them—gave them plenty to eat and waited my chances. At the expiration of the sixth day I was over at Allen's Fresh and heard the officers give orders for the cavalry to go down in St. Mary's County, that the assassins were there. This was my chance, and mounting my horse I made good time to where Booth and Herold were concealed. Booth was glad to know that his time to get into Virginia had come.

"The night was dark and Herold and I lifted Booth onto my horse. I went a little in advance and Herold walked by the horse, leading him. Our progress was slow, but we finally reached my house and I made the two men stay in the orchard while I went in to get something for them to eat. Booth wanted to get off the horse and go in, but I knew it would never do, as there were too many negroes about. His appeals were pitiful, but it was the best I could do.

"I had already told my negro, Henry Woodland, where to leave the boat, and after we got supper we proceeded to the river. We lifted Booth from the horse and carried him to the boat and placed him in the stern, while Herold took the oars. I then lighted a candle and showed Booth by his compass how to steer to get into Machodoc Creek, and gave him directions to Mrs. Queensberry's, who I thought would take care of him.

"Booth was profuse in his thanks to me, and gave me a few dollars for my boat. He offered me more, but I thought he would need money worse than I, though it was the only boat I had. That was the last I saw of Booth.

"You remember my being under arrest at Bryantown?" said Jones to the captain.

"Yes; and, Jones, let me say to you that myself and other officers believed that you knew more than you would tell, but that sanctimonious look of yours saved you."

"Well, I could sit there and hear orders given and reports received which I knew were lies. Some of the reports of the scouting parties were lies made out of the whole cloth, but of course I said nothing. I knew Booth had hit the Virginia shore. I was cursed and abused until I felt I could not restrain myself. Everybody seemed to have a special spite at me. When you posted the bills ordering all citizens to join in the search for Booth, and that to furnish bread or water to him meant death, I felt shakier than ever. After keeping me there at the hotel several days I was told that I would have to come to Washington, and was sent here in an ambulance in charge of Detective Franklin, of Philadelphia, who used every effort to get me drunk and make me tell what I knew. He didn't succeed by a long jump, and finally gave up and took it out in cursing me. I remained seven weeks in Carroll prison, and was not used as a witness, because nobody knew that I knew anything."

"Did you know that Booth was going to kill Lincoln?"

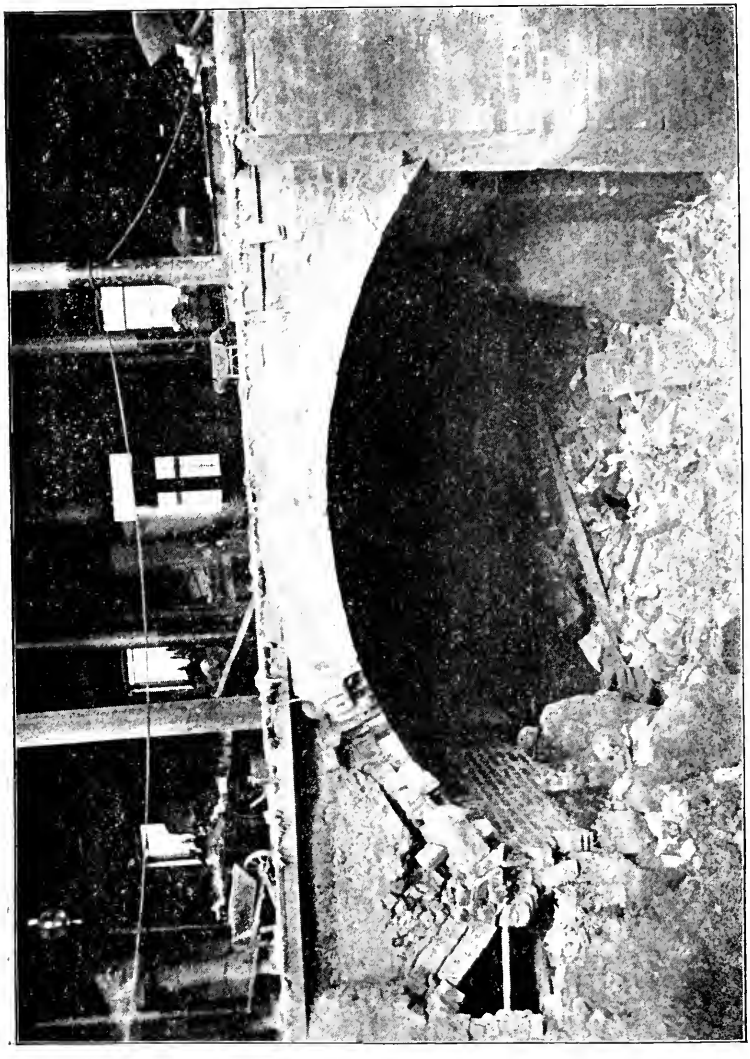
"Upon the word of a man I did not. I did know that plans were laid to kidnap the President and take him to Richmond, and, if the public roads had not been in such an awful condition in the fall and winter of '63 and '64, the plans would have been carried out. The weather had been very mild and the roads were soft and muddy, making it impossible to make good time.

Everything for this scheme was in readiness all the time. Booth was in it. Lincoln could have been caught most any time at the Navy Yard or at the War Department, where he frequently remained until late at night. It would have been no trouble to have crossed the Eastern Branch Bridge and, with relays of fast horses, Port Tobacco could have been reached, and across the Potomac he would have been sent. The boats and men were in readiness all the time. Booth's bullet put an end to this."

"You were in the secret service of the Confederacy?"

"I was chief signal agent of the Confederacy north of the Potomac, and I may say that I worked day and night for the same. I had charge of all rebel mail and the boats along the river. I seldom missed getting the mails into Richmond on time. I took great chances of being killed, and when Richmond was evacuated I was there to collect what was due me, $2,500, and did not get a cent of it. I also had about $3,500 in Confederate bonds. It all went and I was left penniless. The war was a bad thing for me all the way through. It is pretty tough on me now in my old age, but I have never regretted being true to my trust."

After Jones left, Captain Williams said: "I have dealt with and sized up many men during my life, but that man Jones beats them all. He has changed very little during the past twenty-five years. This is the first time I have seen him since we met at Port Tobacco and Bryantown, and yet I remember every feature. He is a wonderful man and one that when he believes he is right nothing can change. I remember when I made that offer of $300,000 in the saloon, he



THE UNDERMINING OF FORD'S THEATER, JUNE, 1893.

was standing next to me at the bar and I could not detect the least movement or change of his face. There was something which told me that he knew where Booth was or could give me the information which would lead to his capture, but he wouldn't be worked. No amount of money or glory would have tempted him. No human being can read his face and tell what is passing in his mind; it is like a stone. He would have gone the hemp route if the facts he now gives had been known then. If he had only told me where Booth was, Boston Corbett would never have had the chance to shoot Booth.

"What a tragedy! What a tragedy! At 10 o'clock Friday night, April 14, 1865, Booth shot the President, mounted a horse, and dashed through the city and across the Eastern Branch Bridge, stopped at Surratt's tavern and got his carbines and whisky. Here he was joined by Herold and the two proceeded to Doctor Mudd's, where Booth had his leg dressed, a crutch made and shaved off his mustache. From here he went to Cox's and there was placed in the keeping of Jones. Great God, how my blood boils, and yet I admire the loyalty and fidelity of Jones. His part was the grandest of any that was played. Nothing could tempt him! In the pine thicket Booth was nursed by his faithful friend until he could be sent to Virginia and meet his death in Garrett's barn. While the flames swept around him he stood like some wild beast hounded to its death, and received the bullet from Corbett's gun. Mrs. Surratt, Lewis Payne, George Atzerodt and David Herold paid the penalty on the scaffold. Dr. Samuel Mudd, Michael O'Laughlin and Samuel Arnold

were sentenced to imprisonment for life at Dry Tortugas. Spangler got six years at the same place. Doctor Mudd was pardoned afterward and is now dead. John Surratt, who escaped to Italy, was brought back and tried. He escaped on a plea of the statute of limitation. Corbett, who killed Booth, is in an insane asylum, and Jones is here to tell more than was ever known before."

CHAPTER VIII.

Major Rathbone's Affidavit.

The following is the affidavit of Major Rathbone, who was seated in the box with President Lincoln when the assassination took place:

District of Columbia, City of Washington:

Henry R. Rathbone, Brevet Major in the Army of the United States, being duly sworn, says that on the 14th of April, instant, at about twenty minutes past 8 o'clock in the evening, he, with Miss Clara H. Harris, left his residence at the corner of Fifteenth and H Streets, and joined the President and Mrs. Lincoln and went with them in their carriage to Ford's Theater, in Tenth Street. The box assigned to the President is in the second tier, on the right-hand side of the audience, and was occupied by the President and Mrs. Lincoln, Miss Harris and this deponent, and by no other person. The box is entered by passing from the front of the building in the rear of the dress circle to a small entry or passage way, about eight feet in length and four feet in width. This passage way is entered by a door which opens on the inner side. The door is so placed as to make an acute angle between it and the wall behind it on the inner side. At the inner end of this passage way is another door, standing squarely across, and opening into the box. On the left-hand side of the passage way, and being near the inner end, is a third door, which opens into the box. This latter door was closed. The party entered the box through the door at the end of the passage way. The box is so constructed that it may be divided into two by a movable partition, one of the doors described opening into each. The front of the box is about ten or twelve feet in length and in the center of the railing is a small pillar overhung with a curtain. The depth of the box from front to rear is about nine feet. The elevation of the box above the stage, including the railing, is about ten or twelve feet.

When the party entered the box a cushioned arm-chair was standing at the end of the box farthest from the stage and nearest the audience. This was also the nearest point to the door by which the box is entered. The President seated himself in this chair, and except that he once left this chair for the purpose of putting on his overcoat, remained so seated until he was shot. Mrs. Lincoln was seated in a chair between the Pres

FALLING OF THE FLOORS OF FORD'S THEATER, JUNE, 1893.

ident and the pillar in the center above described. At the opposite end of the box, that nearest the stage, were two chairs; in one of these, standing in the corner, Miss Harris was seated. At her left hand, and along the wall running from that end of the box to the rear, stood a small sofa. At the end of this sofa, next to Miss Harris, this deponent was seated. The distance between this deponent and the President, as they were sitting, was about seven or eight feet, and the distance between this deponent and the door was about the same. The distance between the President as he sat at the door was about four or five feet. The door, according to the recollection of this deponent, was not closed during the evening.

When the second scene of the third act was being performed and this deponent was intently observing the proceedings upon the stage, with his back toward the door, he heard the discharge of a pistol behind him, and looking around, saw through the smoke a man between the door and the President. At the same time deponent heard him shout some word which deponent thinks was "Freedom." This deponent instantly sprang toward him and seized him. He wrested himself from the grasp and made a violent thrust at the breast of deponent with a large knife. Deponent parried the blow by striking it up, and received a wound several inches deep in his left arm between the elbow and the shoulder The orifice of the wound is about an inch and a half in length, and extends upwards toward the shoulder several inches. The man rushed to the front of the box and deponent endeavored to seize him again, but only caught his clothes as he was leaping over the railing of the box The clothes, as deponent believes, were torn in this attempt to seize him. As he went over upon the stage, deponent cried out with a loud voice, "Stop that man." Deponent then turned to the President. His position was not changed. His head was slightly bent forward and his eyes were closed. Deponent saw that he was unconscious, and supposing him mortally wounded rushed to the door for the purpose of calling medical aid. On reaching the outer door of the passage as above described deponent found it barred by a heavy piece of plank, one end of which was secured in the wall and the other rested against the door. It had been so securely fastened that it required considerable force to remove it. This wedge or bar was about four feet from the floor. Persons on the outside were bearing on the door for the purpose of entering. Deponent removed the bar and the door was opened. Several persons who represented themselves to be surgeons were allowed to enter. Deponent saw there Colonel Crawford, and requested him to prevent other persons from entering the box. Deponent then returned to the box and found the surgeons examining the President's person. They had not yet found the

wound. As soon as it was discovered it was determined to remove him from the theater. He was carried out, and this deponent then proceeded to assist Mrs. Lincoln, who was intensely excited, to leave the theater. On reaching the head of the stairs deponent requested Major Potter to aid him in assisting Mrs. Lincoln across the street to the house to which the President was being conveyed. The wound which the deponent had received had been bleeding very profusely and, on reaching the house, feeling very faint from the loss of blood, he seated himself in the hall, and soon after fainted away and was laid on the floor. Upon the return of consciousness deponent was taken in a carriage to his residence.

In the review of the transaction it is the confident belief of this deponent that the time which elapsed between the discharge of the pistol and the time when the assassin leaped from the box, did not exceed thirty seconds. Neither Mrs. Lincoln nor Miss Harris had left their seats.

H. R. RATHBONE.

Subscribed and sworn before me this 17th day of April, 1865.

A. B. OLIN,

Justice of the Supreme Court of the District of Columbia.

CHAPTER IX.

A Building That Has a Tragic History.

A complete history of the building in which this tragedy occurred will be of especial interest. Ford's Theater was originally a church and was built by the First Baptist congregation, the cornerstone having been laid in 1833. It was located on the east side of Tenth Street, between E and F, about midway of the square The Rev. Obediah B. Brown was the pastor, having been in charge of that congregation for forty-three years, commencing at the time when the First Baptist church was located at the corner of Nineteenth and I Streets, Northwest, in the building now occupied as a Baptist church by a colored congregation. The Rev. Stephen D. Hill succeeded Mr. Brown as pastor in the year 1850 and from that time until 1859 officiated in the Tenth Street church. The last service that he held in the Tenth Street church was in September, 1859, and in the latter part of that year the congregation moved to Thirteenth Street between G and H, where a building for their accommodation had been built. This building had been put up in 1852 by another Baptist organization which united with the Tenth Street organization, making a new congregation and retaining the name and title of the First Baptist church. The Rev. Isaac Cole was the pastor of the Thirteenth Street church and when the two congregations united he became a joint pastor with Dr. Hill,

Rev. Dr. T. C. Teasdale succeeded Dr. Hill as the principal pastor of the new First Baptist church.

On December 10, 1861, the trustees sold the Tenth Street church to David W. Heath and he sold it to John T. Ford. Mr. Ford was well known as a theatrical manager and altered the building—which, though the deed is dated as given above in December, had been his property for some months previous—so that it could be utilized for concerts and other performances. The first invasion of secular performances was by the Carlotta Patti Concert Troupe, which gave two performances on November 19 and 21, 1861. The company consisted of Miss Patti, Madame Patti-Strakosch, Signor Scola, Signor Centimeri, Harry Sanderson, the pianist, and T. Schremer. On Thursday, December 5, following, George Christy's Minstrels opened the house which they designated on their program as George Christy's New Opera House for a short season. Among the company were Glairville and Stratton, Haslam, Japanese Tommy, Tim Hayes and C. O'Neil. They ran until January 25, 1862, when George Christy took a benefit, and the following week they moved to Odd Fellows' Hall on Seventh Street. There were then some repairs made upon the building, which was fitted up so that complete theatrical performances could be given, the stage being widened and new scenery being painted. It was opened on Wednesday evening, March 19, 1862, under the title of "Ford's Atheneum" and the initial performance was the "French Spy," with Miss Lucille Western in the title role. The staff of the Atheneum consisted, according to the program, of John T. Ford, proprietor and manager; John B. Wright, stage manager; Eugene

Fenelon, late of the great Ravel Troupe, leader of orchestra; and it was stated that the building had been reconstructed by James J. Gifford, architect and builder.

On the 31st of March Edwin Forrest opened a long engagement, appearing first in "Richelieu." His principal support was John McCullough, George Becks, C. B. Harrison and Miss Athena. Mr. Forrest only played on Mondays, Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays, and on the off nights John McCullough and Miss Annie Graham played the principal parts in the "Maniac," and the "Octoroon" was also put on. Mr. Forrest closed his engagement of six weeks May 9, taking a benefit and playing *Claude Melnotte* in the "Lady of Lyons." On May 12 James H. Hackett opened as *Falstaff*, his engagement lasting until May 23, when he closed, appearing in "The Kentuckian in 1815," and *Mons. Mallet* in a "Postoffice Mistake." This closed the regular winter and spring season.

On the 28th and 29th of May, Gottschalk and Brignoli with an Italian opera and concert company gave two concerts, and on June 2 the regular summer season opened with "Mazeppa;" Stuart Robson and the Dwarfs, Commodore Foote and Colonel Small, being the principal attractions. During this summer season, which really lasted only about three weeks, a play called "The Fast Men of Washington" was given. After the summer season closed a benefit was given to the widow of C. B. Harrison, when the play "All That Glitters is Not Gold" was presented, with Dan Setchell, John McCullough, Mr. and Mrs. Charles B. Bishop and others in the cast. In the fall of '62 the building opened for regular winter work, under the style of Ford's Thea-

ter. Mr. John S. Clarke was the first star, opening in "Paul Pry" and "Toodles." Then followed Maggie Mitchell in "Margot, the Poultry Dealer," and "Fanchon"; Gabriel Ravel Troupe; C. W. Couldock and Miss Couldock in "Gabriel Cox"; Miss Caroline Richings and Peter Richings in the "Enchantress."

On the 30th of December, 1862, at half-past five in the afternoon, during the engagement of the Richings, Ford's Theater was discovered to be on fire, and notwithstanding the exertions of the fire department the building was totally destroyed; and thus ended the tale of Ford's Theater, which had been constructed out of the old Baptist church.

Mr. Ford was not at all disheartened although his loss was heavy, as was that of the Richings Troupe, which had all their wardrobe destroyed, but he at once set about putting up another theater on the old site. He pushed the work with his characteristic energy and the present structure was opened in August, 1863, with the "Naiad Queen." This was followed by Maggie Mitchell and then the other leading stars in quick succession, and there was no break in its success until the fateful tragedy on April 14, 1865. The new theater was an extremely well constructed house and was perhaps the fashionable theater of its kind. It was well furnished and upholstered, and Mr. Ford from his long experience as a manager was able to present to the people of Washington the very best attractions. During those times the city was constantly filled with army officers and people who were brought here by reason of the war, and Washington from a comparatively rural village had taken on an activity that had never been dreamed of.

The influx of soldiers, the additional number of Government clerks required, the presence of army contractors and those who were associated with them, made money plentiful in Washington, and although there was often great anxiety for the troops at the front, there seemed to be no lack of inclination on the part of those that were at the Capital to witness good performances. President Lincoln was a great theater-goer. He found rest from the cares of the great responsibility that was upon him in looking at a stage performance, and the managers of the different theaters were always glad to have him attend. On that fatal night, even after he had signified his intention of being present, he came very near not attending, and it was some time after the performance commenced before his well-known form was seen wending its way back of the balcony seats to the boxes which had been prepared for his occupancy and which had been decorated in his honor. He was recognized by the audience as he took his seat in the box and was heartily cheered. Everybody was in good humor. The long war which had cost so much money and which had evolved such an expenditure of precious blood upon so many hard-fought fields was over. The supremacy of the Government had been vindicated and those lately in rebellion had surrendered. There had been a succession of rejoicings at the National Capital and for nights the city had been brilliantly illuminated in honor of the victory of the Union arms. Little did the audience think as they cheered the President, who was perhaps nearer to the hearts of the people than any other man who occupied that high office, that a scene not upon the bills but an

act which would thrill them and the whole world with horror would be so soon enacted. Little did Mr. Lincoln think as he turned his face to the stage and watched the quiet humor of *Asa Trenchard*, the antics of *Lord Dundreary*, the pathos of *Mary Meredith* and the terrible lesson conveyed in the character of *Abel Murcott* in the play of "Our American Cousin," that that play would be the last thing that he would look upon in life.

The story of the tragedy has already been told; it need not be again repeated. With this ended the career of the building as a theater.

Immediately after the removal of Mr. Lincoln from the theater where he had been shot to the Petersen house across the street, where he died, the theater was taken possession of by the Government, guards were placed at every entrance and for months it remained closed, a silent but eloquent witness of the fearful calamity that had befallen the nation. Finally the Government purchased the building from Mr. Ford, completely remodeled it and it became a part of the Surgeon General's Office of the War Department. Into this building was removed the Army Medical Museum, consisting of specimens of peculiar wounds and diseases which had been developed on the field and in the hospitals during the war, and it was a peculiar coincidence that among the exhibits were three of the cervical vertebræ of John Wilkes Booth, showing the wound from the bullet fired by Boston Corbett, which ended the life of the assassin. Thus, in the same building in which he committed his crime was seen the ghastly evidence of the manner in which he paid the penalty.

If there is such a thing as bad luck it seemed to follow this building, for the terrible accident which took place June 9, 1893, has probably ended the usefulness of that structure, even for Government employés. On that day three of the floors fell through, carrying down with them hundreds of Government clerks who, but a moment before, had been quietly and faithfully attending to their business. The final record of deaths from this calamity was but twenty-two, but the serious injury to many others cannot be estimated. This frightful accident was a fitting termination to the career of the building that had known many vicissitudes and that started as a Baptist church.

CHAPTER X.

Relics of Mr. Lincoln.

As the result of the patriotic efforts of the Memorial Association of the District, an organization which has already accomplished a great deal in designating with some permanent mark many of the places of historic interest in this city, the house where Lincoln breathed his last is now open to the public. It is a plain three-story brick located on Tenth Street, just across the way from Ford's old theater building, and has been used as a private residence ever since the tragedy, nearly thirty years ago. It has, however, undergone no changes, and the long narrow room in the first story in the back building where the great President died, is still the same as it was. The association has leased the building, and it now contains a remarkable collection of relics and memorials of Lincoln.

This collection was brought together by the zeal and energy of Capt. O. H. Oldroyd, who began as far back as the year 1860 to collect everything that pertained to the name and fame of Lincoln. He joined the first wide-awake club before he was a voter. As the incidents of that time grew, and artists and caricaturists and correspondents increased and made history, Oldroyd kept up with the procession. He collected the pictures of the first stirring scenes of that period. He gathered the badges of all the political parties of that day, and they were many, and the letter paper and envelopes, and stamps and currency of those days, all of

which had some significance, were preserved, together with the first accounts of the firing on Sumter and the comments on the same from American, English and French prints, and all these he has in his collection systematically arranged. He enlisted in 1861. While he was in the army he continued his collection of everything in which Lincoln was a figure. After the war he was steward of the National Soldiers' Home at Dayton, and while in that place his efforts to add to his collection were rewarded, but at considerable expense.

Until the spring of '93 this collection was in the house in Springfield, Ill., which was the home of Lincoln when he was elected President. The property, upon the death of Mrs. Lincoln, came into the possession of Robert T. Lincoln, who, some years ago, gave it to the State of Illinois. Mr. Oldroyd was made custodian, and kept his collection in the house, where for a number of years past it has been one of the points of interest to visitors to Springfield. Last spring, however, another custodian was appointed, and so Mr. Oldroyd removed the collection, which was his personal property.

He accepted the invitation of the association to bring the collection to this city, and has completed its installation in the old Lincoln house. It is hoped that the collection has now found a permanent home, and no doubt this hope will be realized if Congress consents to purchase the house. All told, there are about 2,500 articles in this collection, comprising everything connected with the life of Lincoln from his earliest days down to his death. There are busts, pictures and medals almost in bewildering variety. The pictures, taken from newspapers and photographs and sketches, give a vivid representation of many of the stirring scenes in the life of

the martyred President. There are pictures of his early home, showing his humble origin. There is a rail which is vouched for as having been cut by Lincoln himself. The collection of the badges and medals used in the political campaigns is interesting. The furniture in the rooms was used by Lincoln and include his office chairs and the kitchen stove.

Mr. Lincoln's place in the current literature of the country is shown by the library of a thousand volumes which contain accounts of Lincoln and references to him in one capacity or another. Then there is a bookcase containing eighty-six distinct biographies of Lincoln, from the earliest down to the elaborate volumes of the Nicolay-Hay history. A rare collection is some 350 pamphlets containing sermons delivered by ministers in this country, as well as abroad, on the death of Mr. Lincoln. There is hardly a phase in the entire career of Mr. Lincoln that is not illustrated. As an illustration of the impress which this man made upon his times the collection is a wonderful success.

Not the least interesting of the collection is a lot of manuscripts from distinguished and well-known men of the country, each giving the writer's view of Lincoln from his standpoint. There are over 200 of these. They were all written at the personal request of Oldroyd. The list includes such men as Grant, Sherman, Sheridan and Hayes. One paper is from Dennis Hanks and another from the Rev. Dr. Barrows on the religious side of Lincoln's life. A photograph of the writer accompanies each paper.

It is impossible to enumerate all the articles that are now contained in the three rooms of the Tenth Street house.

The throwing open of this collection to the public was celebrated by a gathering of distinguished men, among whom were the Vice President, Senator Cullom, Chief Justice Fuller, Commissioner Ross, ex-Commissioner Douglass, General and Mrs. Schofield, General Wheeler, Dr. and Mrs. Hamlin, Mr. T. W. Noyes, Rev. Dr. J. H. Elliott, Bishop Keane, Rector of the Catholic University; Mr. Jere Wilson, Mr. S. P. Langley, Secretary of the Smithsonian Institute.

The exercises of the evening consisted for the most part of speeches. The meeting was called to order by the Chief Justice in his capacity as president of the association. He spoke for a few moments of the objects of the Memorial Association as being typical of the growth of feeling throughout the country regarding reverence for things historic. He said that it was fitting that this work of preserving historic relics should be most prosecuted here in the Capital of the Nation. Justice Fuller then introduced Senator Cullom, who knew Mr. Lincoln longer and better than any other man now alive. Senator Cullom spoke briefly but feelingly of Mr. Lincoln. In fact, it seemed with this little collection of people sitting about in the parlors of this curious old house, discussing the merits and qualities of a man who has now been dead some time, as though they were speaking of one who had just passed away, and whose death was a personal blow to each one. It was an interesting and unusual evening.

Senator Cullom said in the course of his remarks that nothing could possibly have gained his consent to remain away on such an occasion. It had been his good fortune to live in Springfield, Ill., the home of Mr. Lin-

coln and the resting place of his ashes. His memory of the great man ran back to the time when, as a small boy, he used to hear his father speak of this rising young lawyer by the name of Lincoln. He remembered that when would-be litigants would come to his father for advice as to what counsel to employ his father would advise them to secure the services of Judge Logan if he was there, referring to the county seat, otherwise he would advise them to go to Lincoln, a young man who would answer their purposes quite as well. Senator Cullom first saw Mr. Lincoln as a lawyer in a murder case, in which the lamented Colonel Baker participated as counsel. He still considered that the greatest trial he had ever seen. He knew Mr. Lincoln in the hustings, knew him as a candidate for Congress, and in the joint debate with Douglas, which is admittedly the greatest debate ever held in this country. After such an acquaintance he could say that Lincoln, all in all, was the greatest and noblest statesman since the days of Washington.

He spoke especially of this building and its possibilities and said that he hoped it would be a Mecca for all who loved liberty and the name of Lincoln.

Vice President Stevenson was introduced to make a few remarks, in the course of which he said that it was highly proper that this gathering should listen to the words of an old friend and neighbor of Mr. Lincoln. He could but speak in approval of all that Senator Cullom had said. In his opinion, the Government should own this building and make it a permanent memorial.

"I remember," said the Vice President, "in a memorial speech of Washington it was said that Virginia

gave him to America and America gave him to the world. So of Mr. Lincoln, Illinois had given him to America and America had given him to the world and to the ages. It is proper that there should be here a memorial for the children of our land of one of the greatest and, even more, one of the kindest hearted men that ever lived."

Bishop Keane followed with a brief address, in which he paid an eloquent tribute to the memory of Mr. Lincoln. He said that partisanship is one of the menaces to our land and he thanked God that as an offset to such tendencies the memories of an Abraham Lincoln were to be preserved. He then went on to speak of the desirabilities of a country which has so little of a past, marking with a mark and a seal spots which like this should be so dear to the memory of all patriotic Americans.

Dr. Hamlin read letters of regret from the Secretary of State, ex-President Harrison, ex-Vice President Morton, Cardinal Gibbons, President Gilman, of Johns Hopkins University; Dr. Gallaudet, Dr. Welling, of Columbian University; President Seth Low, of Columbia College; Mr. Hornblower, Justice Strong, Mr. Frank Hatton, ex-Secretary Noble, and President Hastings, of Union Theological Seminary.